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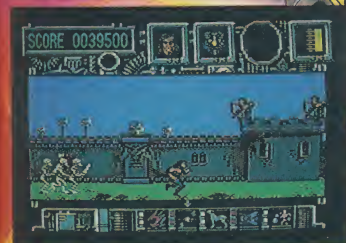
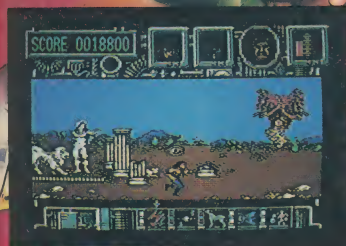
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*Eye of Newt
Blood of Rat
Bring Me The Powers of
Vision & Combat*



screen shot from CBM version



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FUTURE TENSE

PRODUCER: Mystic Software

PRICE: £3

AUTHORS: Christopher Ward and Hugh Steed

There's quite a clever title and concept behind this one—*Future Tense*, a text-only PAW adventure, refers to the all-too-plausible collapse of society as values and sensibilities are munched up inside countless computers run by automatons. (At this point in the review I'd just like to say hello to anyone out there in the civil service.)

In this story it's a Dr Fenton Blake who's seen the writing on the wall, or perhaps the curious anomalies in the printout, which moved him to write of his worries for the future in his banned work *What Price Progress?*.

In 2239, when Blake had been quietly gagged for several years

already, his greatest fears were realised. The Master Computer attempted to increase efficiency and to eliminate the weakest link in the chain of government — ie the humans — and it set about creating a superhuman race with the collusion of the nuttiest top scientists in the land.

Their first attempts, however, created a whole host of weirdos little better than the bunch they already had, a mutant race of humanoid fruit and vegetables (yes, more civil servants). As the story line goes, these creatures hated the humans who had been devouring their brethren for centuries, and held a particular grudge toward those weedy unhealthy individuals who called themselves vegetarians.

The mutant fruit-and-veg gang broke out of the laboratories and rose up against the western continent of Florabunda; successfully capturing it they renamed the place the

Vegetarian Nation. (I do hope you're following this!)

The humans, forced from the vegetable plot, congregated in an adjacent continent and formed a political party, the Society Of Human Preservation or SHP. Its purpose: to hold off the threat from the vegetableheads.

In *Future Tense* you are an agent for the SHP, living in a flat in Silverton, a small city to the north of the eastern continent which has become known as Halfworld.

The first striking thing about *Future Tense* is its friendly and welcoming writing style, both in the instructions and in the game itself. This contrasts nicely with a rather dire view of the future.

You kick off in your flat, which is known to the government as 202 729 GHS 2184 though you prefer to call it home. We soon learn through the well-written and informative location descriptions that you are living on the wrong side of town, where 'Mother Nature has lovingly adorned the walls with a tasteful green fungus'.

As early as the second location we see that the detailed onscreen notes before the game are necessary, as EXAMINE TRENCHCOAT is indeed quite distinct from SEARCH TRENCHCOAT. In *Future Tense* EXAMINE is used to bring out general information about an object, as a cursory glance would, and SEARCH is reserved for a more probing examination. Also, SEARCH relates to a specific object rather than to the general searching of a location which it gives in some games.

And just to be exhaustive on this topic, I'd like to point out that EXAM by itself won't achieve much ('the laws of physics and the nature of society being what they are, you can't do that' is the reaction) — PAW has been primed here to work on the first five letters, so EXAMI is the shortest abbreviation for us lazybones.

I'll leave you with some hints

for the game provided by programmer Christopher (The Red Lion) Ward:

Here's a searching question:
Are you well-equipped?
Because, across the water,
That's where many an agent
slipped.

If you think the press is rubbish
You may well be right
But if you're travelling, it will be
A very welcome sight.

Follow the path of the old tin can
And the broken bottle too
Then if you fight the tyrant
A reward will wait for you.

Before you make arrangements
Be wary, walls have ears
And on your journey go prepared
Or risk two promising careers!
Mutant humanoid fruit and veg
say

'Humans make us rant!'
And this is true, so ask yourself
'Do I make a convincing plant?'
Careful examination,
In true detective style,
Will lead to a revelation
Bringing you closer to Kumber
the Life.

If clearance is required
Remember Kumber's ego
Act like a Kumber groupie
Then up, up, up we go.
Under detailed scrutiny
Your cover will be blown
So organise a bit of chaos
Then you're on your own.

Mystic Software can be contacted at 67 Fergleen Park, Galliagh, Derry, Northern Ireland BT48 8LF.

DIFFICULTY: verses make it a little easier
GRAPHICS: none
PRESENTATION: OK
INPUT FACILITY: sophisticated PAW
RESPONSE: fast
GENERAL RATING: good

Atmosphere	84%
Vocabulary	85%
Logic	83%
Addictive qualities	84%
OVERALL	85%



THE PROSPECTOR and THE CROWN OF RAMHOTEP

PRODUCER: Tartan

PRICE: £2.95

AUTHORS: Tartan

here are some themes that just look winners the moment you see them, and *The Prospector*, the first of two games on this tape, has one of those. Yep! It's a case of gold in them thar hills and a pile of mule's dung to ain'bardy who sez there ain't!

The place: Tombstone Creek. The date: 1849. You join thousands of others in a mad scramble for gold, arriving in this Californian one-horse town typically broke, with nothing more than the filthy shirt on your back. You'll have to use every ounce of your wits to get some money together, buy the necessary equipment, and then set about prospecting.

Then it's just a simple matter of dodging that iron pyrites (fool's gold) and get what's coming to ya — or is it? The assay office, where all claims must be registered, lies in the centre of Tombstone Creek, and it's your heartfelt wish to end up there in the near future — in one piece.

The very name of Tombstone Creek might suggest a town where shoot-outs are the order of the day, but you're far more likely to bow out of the game early due to the sheriff's enthusiasm for a well-ordered town. Hence, drinking the whisky you find in the saloon will see you incarcerated in the town's jail for 30 days, and the same sentence is given for pinching the lawman's hat. Either offence forces an early exit from the game.

The rest of *The Prospector* involves one or two tricky manoeuvres which will get you put in jail again if you don't get them exactly right.

It's a smart enough *Quilled* game, with reasonable (though slow) graphics and a helpful beep to inform the player when the picture-drawing is at last complete. Perhaps the redesigned character set is a shade modern-looking for a story set in old California, but at least it's very readable.

The plot and the way it unravels are just that bit too obvious at times, but the actual nitty-gritty is surprisingly convoluted and will give even experienced adventurers a run for their money. There are still one or two typographical errors on my preproduction copy, but perhaps all will be well by the time *The Prospector* is released.



► There's gold in them thar clones: you're always broke, seeking Egyptian treasure in *The Crown Of Ramhotep* (above) and Wild West dollars in *The Prospector* (below)



THE CROWN OF RAMHOTEP

Now for the second part of this two-parter, *The Crown Of Ramhotep*.

Some time ago you received by carrier a package containing an ancient scroll, a curious box, and a letter from an old friend, a well-known archaeologist. The letter reads as follows:

Dear John

As you may have heard I have been excavating in Egypt and I have made a remarkable discovery. I have found the Crown Of Ramhotep. I was fortunate to escape but had to leave the crown inside the pyramid. I intend to set out on another expedition to the pyramid as soon as possible. Please come and assist me to retrieve this fabulous treasure. I suggest you come here to the village on the Nile

where we met last year and then journey south to the oasis. All being well, we can share the glory of the discovery together.

Yours sincerely
Bill

Needless to say, with an offer of adventure like that you soon set off with your car and as much loot as you can scrape together. Unwisely, however, you spend most of your money on frivolous pleasures during the cruise to Egypt, so you begin the game just off the boat in a cheap hotel.

As in *The Prospector*, in *The Crown Of Ramhotep* you can call up help at the end of the instructions and before the game itself is loaded. But just to remind you of your self-inflicted plight the first help line is 'Remember you're broke! You will need some money'.

The Crown Of Ramhotep is almost an exact copy of *The Prospector* in style, right down to the redefined character set. The slowly-drawn pictures are still here, as is the rather obvious plot (though there's nothing wrong with a plot which runs smoothly!).

A couple of obscure vocabulary solutions to problems will ensure that even hardened adventurers find the game exacting; indeed, some might find the obvious plot pathways mixed with a few difficult problems a good blend.

I think the two games on this Tartan tape can be marked together; though *The Crown Of Ramhotep* might have a marginally better EXAMINE command, for example, they're very similar in structure, style and quality. I can't wholeheartedly recommend the pair to most gamers – they just don't show enough novel features (it would be nice if the maps mentioned in the games came onscreen, or something).

But the kind of adventurer who collects most of what's going on should by all means send off for these to Tartan at 61 Baillie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, Angus DD10 9DT.

Like all utility adventures, *The Prospector* and *The Crown Of Ramhotep* are competent and there are few distractions from solving the puzzles.

DIFFICULTY: mostly obvious, but some very tricky parts
GRAPHICS: average, slow
PRESENTATION: OK
INPUT FACILITY: verb/noun
RESPONSE: fast, but slow graphics
GENERAL RATING: competent

Atmosphere	69%
Vocabulary	68%
Logic	72%
Addictive qualities	72%
OVERALL	71%

KARYSSIA QUEEN OF DIAMONDS

PRODUCER: Incentive

PRICE: £7.95

AUTHORS:

D & R Shacklady



or what seems like all summer long the big boys have kept well clear of adventures, so it was with interest that I loaded up *Karyssia* from Incentive. The packaging is rather plain, but this Medallion Adventure, written using Incentive's own Graphic Adventure Creator (GAC) is graphically quite attractive.

Superficially it'll be the crisp 3-D pictures which attract the adventurer, but *Karyssia* has many highly sophisticated features such as speech, magic, cabalism (spoken magic), combat with a huge variety of weapons, and a full story – all will help its successful launch into the adventurer's imagination.

The Isle Of Senduarin was once a very pleasant land with famous diamond mines. Under the wise rule of the 'smiling monarch' King Merenon I, the wealth from the precious stones was spread throughout his peoples.

Prophets, however, predicted doom in the form of the king's first-born, and when the princess Karyssia was born the prophets,

convinced of their infallibility, made an abortive attempt on her life.

Later, two more daughters – Anassia and Sarassia – were born to the king.

On his death Karyssia became queen and proved a wise ruler. But there were rumours of the diamond mines running down, and the people of Senduarin became aware of their real plight. The money to transform Senduarin into a self-sufficient agricultural state was to be found in Karyssia's vast wealth, but for a while the island had to rely on its near neighbours, Arduarin and Tresduarin, for food.

Karyssia's generosity with her fortune made her ever more popular, but the truth was that the prophets had been right all along – only Karyssia and her sisters knew that the diamonds had NOT run out.

Meanwhile on Arduarin, the largest of the three islands, there was turmoil. Three fighters had cut down the king and assumed control. They were extremely unpopular, so Karyssia seized her chance and offered the fighters a large sum to leave their island. This they gladly accepted and Karyssia took over the throne of Arduarin with its people's approval.

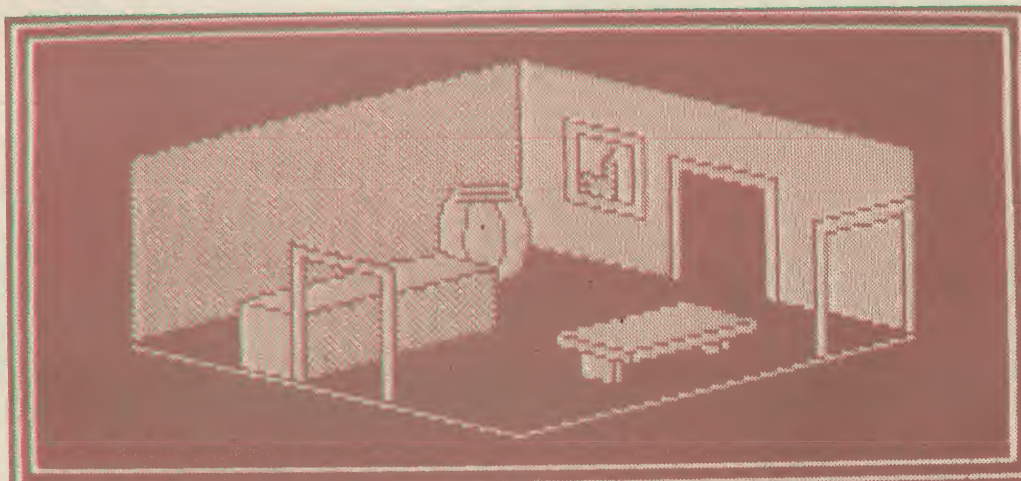
Soon Karyssia and her sisters controlled all three islands, using aggression and tyranny to retain power. Karyssia set up a huge army to control the disgruntled peoples and herself became skilled in swordplay. She appointed 12 bodyguards and a court wizard, the evil Sindowa, to protect her. Her summary justice emanated from the Royal Castle in the north of Arduarin, set high in the Altivian Mountains near Stillwater Lake. This lake, set in a high plateau, is said to hold strange powers...

The rightful heir to the throne of Arduarin, Loranin, has asked you to kill Karyssia. This will involve a long journey to the Royal Castle. You begin the adventure in the Sword & Bucket Inn in Mottinan, the southernmost town of Tresduarin. You should endeavour to travel across this island, pass through Senduarin and go on to the far north, to the Ativian Mountains and Karyssia.

Your first rendezvous is with Loranin in a cove, and so you quickly sup up and take your leave of the innkeeper of the Sword & Bucket.

How you react to the characters you meet in the game will depend upon how they present themselves, but just in

► In a 3-D world of war and complex magic, the tale of *Karyssia* unfolds



You are in the Sword and Buckler inn. The innkeeper, Barrinir, is here. The scullery is to the west. A large stone stairway leads down. A painting hangs on the southern wall. What now?



case they want to get aggressive you have the option to attack them. This can be risky, though – you can't retreat from a battle once your opponent is engaged.

Naturally enough, the victor is usually the more able of the fighters, determined by comparing skill and stamina ratings. (Your own status can be monitored with STATUS.)

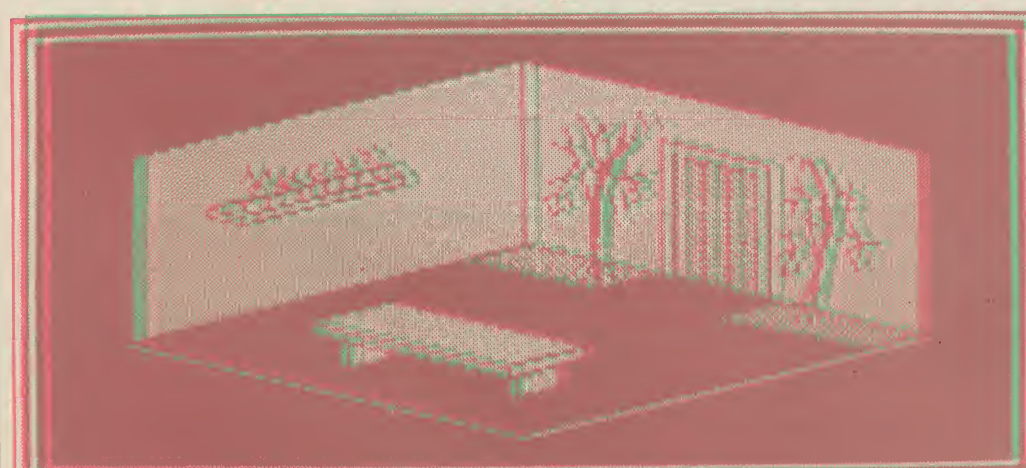
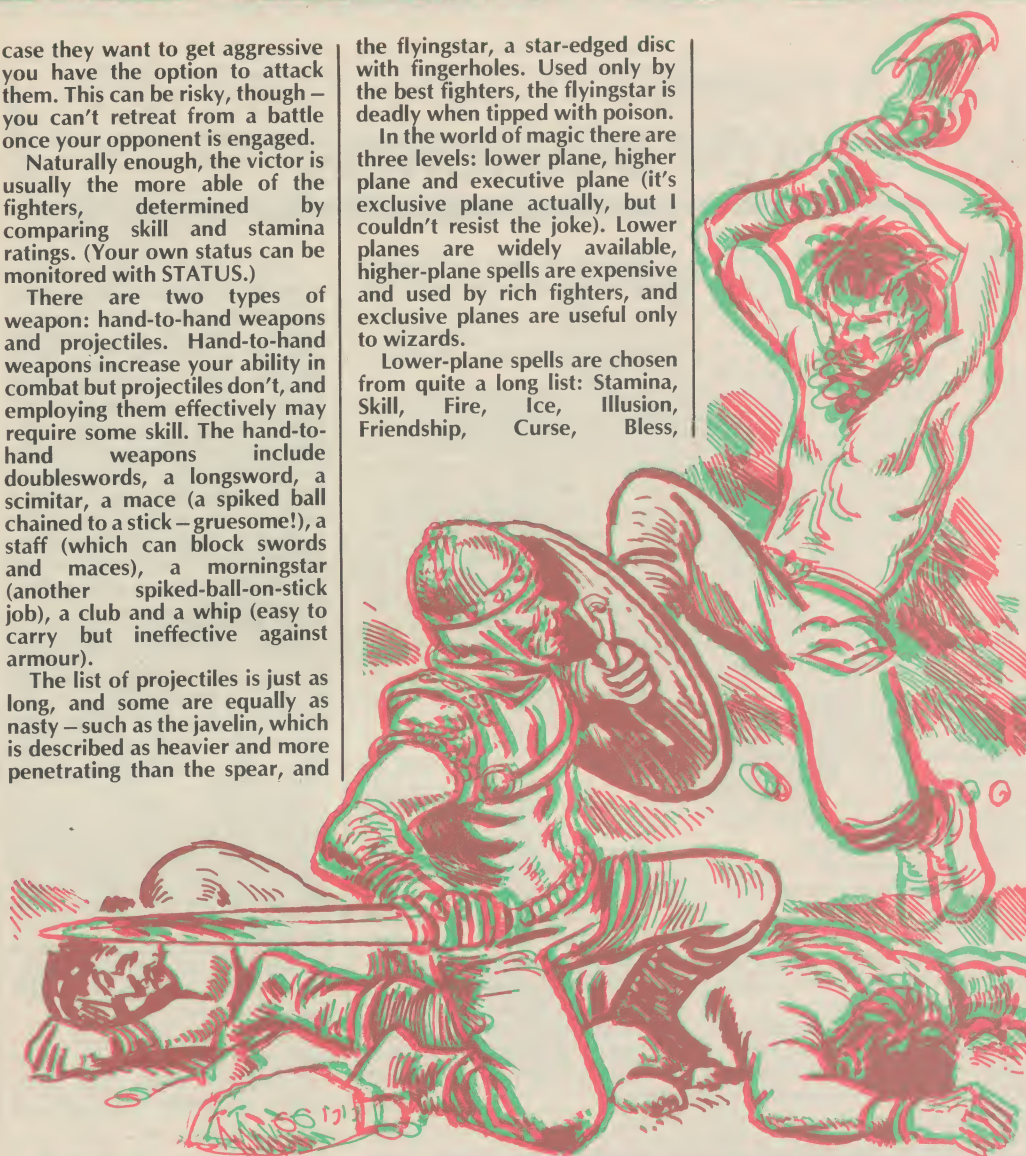
There are two types of weapon: hand-to-hand weapons and projectiles. Hand-to-hand weapons increase your ability in combat but projectiles don't, and employing them effectively may require some skill. The hand-to-hand weapons include doubleswords, a longsword, a scimitar, a mace (a spiked ball chained to a stick – gruesome!), a staff (which can block swords and maces), a morningstar (another spiked-ball-on-stick job), a club and a whip (easy to carry but ineffective against armour).

The list of projectiles is just as long, and some are equally as nasty – such as the javelin, which is described as heavier and more penetrating than the spear, and

the flyingstar, a star-edged disc with fingerholes. Used only by the best fighters, the flyingstar is deadly when tipped with poison.

In the world of magic there are three levels: lower plane, higher plane and executive plane (it's exclusive plane actually, but I couldn't resist the joke). Lower planes are widely available, higher-plane spells are expensive and used by rich fighters, and exclusive planes are useful only to wizards.

Lower-plane spells are chosen from quite a long list: Stamina, Skill, Fire, Ice, Illusion, Friendship, Curse, Bless,



shop. Two large plants stand by the door. An impressive array of flowers graces the shelves. Florassia is here. What now? Florassia. You talk to Florassia. What now? bed.

Blindness, Remove, Growth, Invisibility, Fear, Levitation. Probably the most interesting of the higher-plane spells is the Dispel Magic Spell, which wipes out lower-plane magic.

To cast a spell, CAST (type) SPELL ON (object), as in CAST CURSE SPELL ON INNKEEPER, or simply CAST CURSE where the object is obvious.

That curious word 'cabalism' here refers to spoken magic. It usually involves an amulet and is cast on an object. If you know a cabalistic spell, and you are in possession of the amulet, then you can use it by saying the spell to the object, as in DIAMOND (SPELL). This format follows that of all speech in *Karyssia*, as in FLORASSIA HELLO, or INNKEEPER GIVE ME A DRINK.

The Ultimate-style 3-D graphics are the first thing you notice in *Karyssia*: you see the picture by looking down obliquely through the two nearest walls, which are presented as see-through. The doors in these walls are marked only by their ghostly frames. Along with the very smart redesigned character set, these pictures, though sparse and often repeating items of furniture, give the game an attractive appearance.

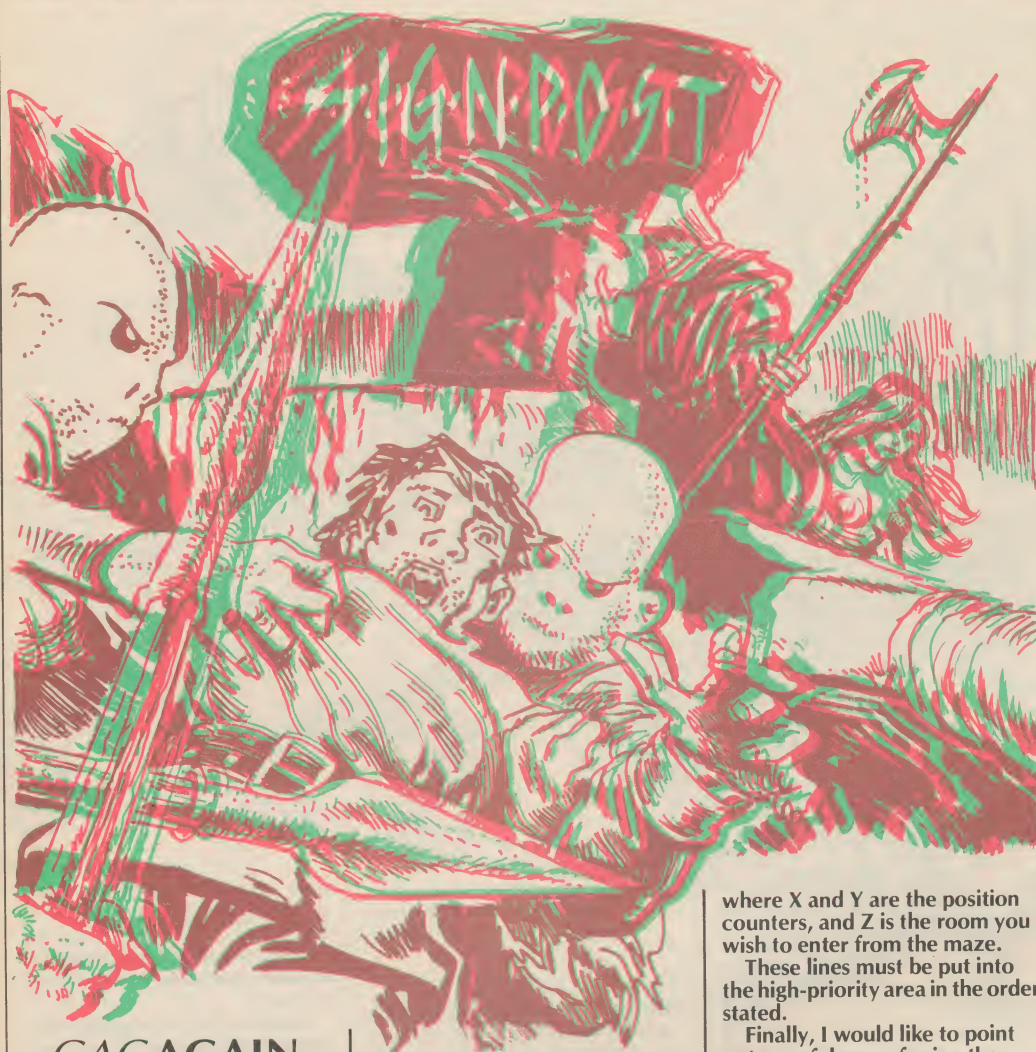
As for gameplay, there are no midcompass directions like NE, SE and so on, which are often missing from GAC games. There are one or two places where you might be puzzled as to why you can't pick up an item – the acorn at the tree, for example, or the 25 gold pieces – but this is because you already possess such items as soon as you meet them.

Another problem: there might be a little warning tucked away in the instructions, but I found out the hard way that L, intended by me to mean LOOK, sent the program into LOAD mode. You can quickly get out of the situation by BREAKing, but for a moment the program has you hopping mad...

Karyssia is a fine adventure with many admirable features. The pretty 3-D graphics are thin on the ground, and the location descriptions aren't the most evocative I've read, but the plot, which unwinds along three separately-loading parts, holds the attention marvellously.

DIFFICULTY: not difficult
GRAPHICS: few, but very pretty
PRESENTATION: good, clean
INPUT FACILITY: basically verb/noun
RESPONSE: reasonably fast
GENERAL RATING: good

Atmosphere	81%
Vocabulary	85%
Logic	83%
Addictive quality	88%
OVERALL	87%



GAC AGAIN

Dear Signpost
After reading Ian Bryer's letter in the July CRASH about GAC, I decided to put pen to paper. I'd like to make an addition to the bit about repeat descriptions. I applied the short routine to one of my own games but I found something wrong with it - I could only use it for one repeat description. After fiddling about with it I came up with a simple alteration:

```
IF (AT(ROOM$1) OR AT
(RROOM$2) OR AT
(RROOM$3) . . . SET?(0))
MESS (MESSAGE) END
```

This can now be repeated for different descriptions. Put RESE 0 END at the end of the whole high-priority area as a separate line.

My second point is on the same lines. By using the counter function you can set up a sort of two-dimensional array to make a maze, ie in a wood or following winding tunnels etc.

```
IF (AT (ROOM1) AND
VBNO = (DIRECTION)
GOTO (ROOMX) X CSET
1 Y CSET 2 END
IF (AT (ROOM1) AND
VBNO = (DIRECTION))
INCR/DECR 1/2 END
```

Repeat this for all directions. If you include NE, SE, SW, NW in the maze, then both counters must be altered, ie INCR or DECR 1 and 2, depending on the direction. X and Y determine the position you begin on the x- and y-coordinates, eg 5 CSET 1 4 CSET 2 would start you five locations up and four locations across on the maze map. You only have to define one room, eg ROOM 100.

You're lost, deep in a spectacular forest full of the voices of birds and insects.

CONNECTIONS

```
N 100 NE 100 E 100 SE 100
S 100 SW 100 W 100 NW 100
(This room is defined as ROOM X
- see earlier)
```

Now you could have a huge forest or tunnel network or whatever, up to 255*255 (the maximum size of counter) or you could make the maze wrap around, ie

```
IF (CTR X (< OR >) Y) X
CSET Z END
```

where X is the specified counter and Y is the maximum distance you can travel, or vice versa. To leave the maze you must include lines such as

```
IF (CTR X = 3 AND CTR Y
= 5 AND VBNO = (DI-
RECTION) GOTO Z END
```

where X and Y are the position counters, and Z is the room you wish to enter from the maze.

These lines must be put into the high-priority area in the order stated.

Finally, I would like to point out a useful way of using the CONN condition. Instead of putting the directions at the end of every room description, just make out the directions as messages, ie UP, DOWN, NORTH, EAST, SOUTH, WEST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTHWEST, NORTHEAST, NORTHWEST (each direction a separate message). Then in the high-priority conditions enter for each direction

```
IF ( CONN (DIRECTION
VBNO) > 0 AND SET?0)
MESS (APPROPRIATE
DIRECTION) END
```

Before this you could also have a message, eg 'Exits lead -'. But the following line

```
IF (SET?0) MESS (EXITS
LEAD - ) END
```

must come before the connection table is checked and all this must come before the final high-priority line RESE 0 END.

Darrell Smith, S Yorks

PAWADVICE

Dear Derek

Here are some tips on how to use Gilsoft's brilliant utility, PAW.

CONTAINERS

First put your container's name

in nouns with a value of 50 or higher so it will be recognised as 'it'. Put in the object text the name of your container and note down its number. Under Object Weights remember to put it as a container. Under Words put its noun and adjective (if it has one). Insert the Location with the same number as the object and leave it blank, ie object 7 - Location 7. Put the following into response:

I PUT - 0

PREP IN NOUN2 (container)

PRESENT (container number)

AUTOP (location of inside of container) DONE

For example,

PREP IN NOUN2 BAG PRE-

SENT7 AUTOP7 DONE

I GET - 0

PREP OUT NOUN2 BAG PRE-

SENT7 AUTOP7 DONE

I LOOK BAG

PREP IN MESSAGE2 LISTAT7

DONE

where message 2 is 'In the bag is:'

INTRODUCTION SCREEN

To make a tune play as soon as the game has loaded go to Process1 and:

I **

AT 0 BEEP 10 150 BEEP 10

100 BEEP 10 50 BEEP 10

100 BEEP 10 150 PAUSE

15 BEEP 10 100 BEEP 10

100 (or your own little tune).

Also, to make your game look more professional key this into Process1:

I **

AT 0 ANYKEY GOTO 1

DESC

GRAPHICS

Remember always to select default colours for the pictures - otherwise they are treated as subroutines. When drawing subroutines always remember to remove the plots that you use. Otherwise they will be only drawn at the same spot, ie if you plot a subroutine at 197 56 you cannot put it anywhere else on a personal picture - only at 197 56.

MONEY

If you want a currency in your game choose a flag to hold the number of coins carried and insert two messages: 'I am carrying' and 'coins', so that if flag 100 held the number of coins and the messages were 1 and 2 a conduct could read

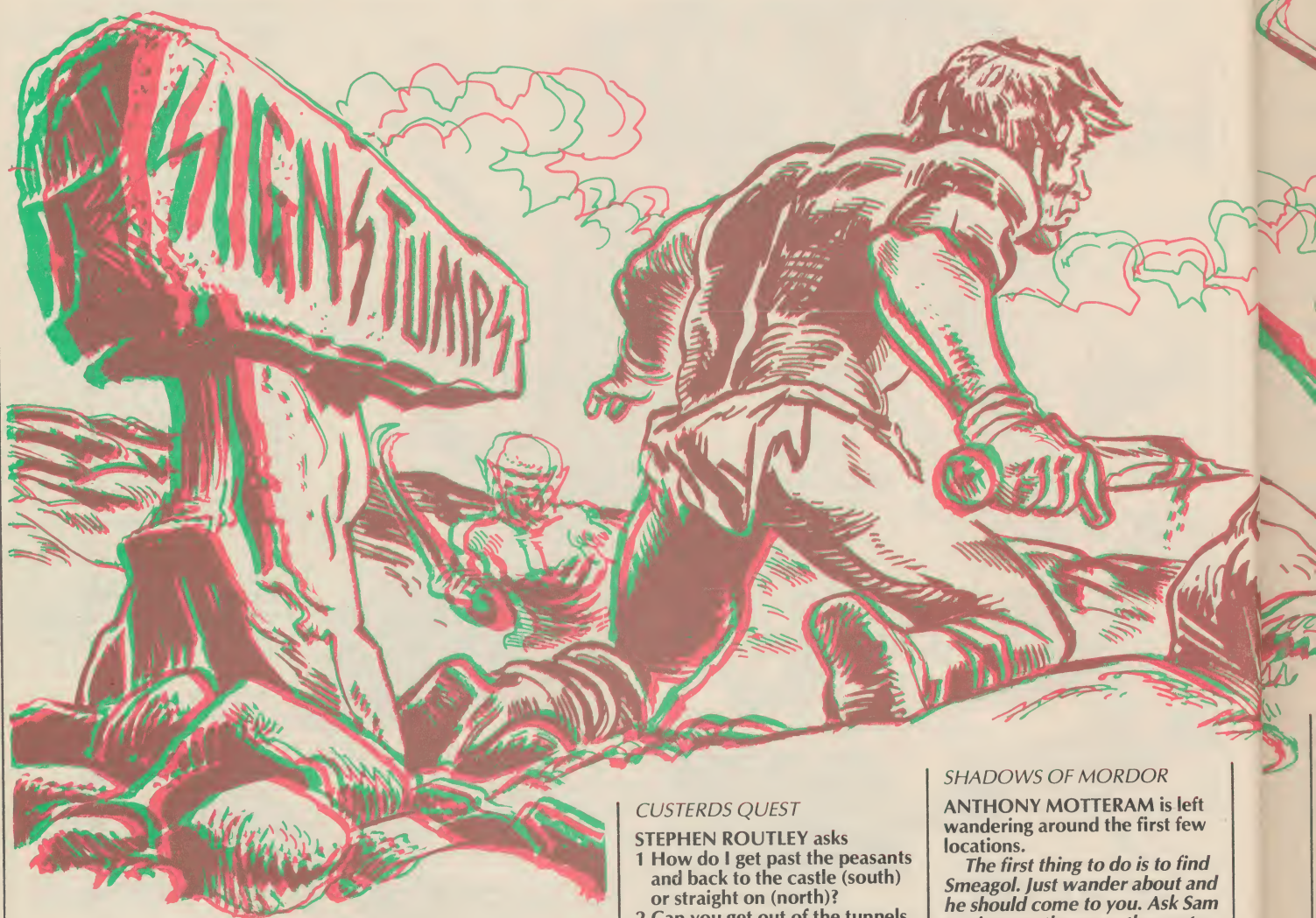
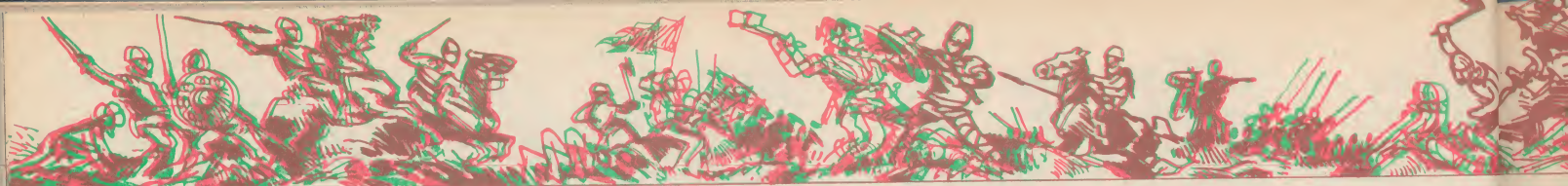
```
MESSAGE1 PRINT 100
MESSAGE2 DONE.
```

I hope these notes help some budding adventure-writers.

Stephen Flint, Nottingham

Stephen wins this month's £30 worth of software - yes, they've finally given me more money for the prize!

DB



MORDON'S QUEST

'Who is the king of the jungle?' wonders LES MILLAR. *Flicking through my files I reckon you might give Tarzan a go. (Thanks to E GODWIN.)*

'And how do I get past the barrier in the future complex?' *Admantium barrier: let your fingers do the walking.*

ALLAN PRICE wonders how to get past the invisible barrier and how to repair the reactor droid.

Pray a little longer, and in space age get the geiger counter and go to Rome and the barn. Type look and insert the battery into the droid.

THE HOBBIT

NICK HUNT wants to know what to do once Bard has killed the red dragon, assuming you have the treasure.

Take the treasure and keep going south and down till you meet some pale bulbous eyes. Go in the direction you were heading in once, then wait twice, and go in the direction you were going in again. When you get past the pale eyes you will be able to get back to where you started. (JASON LIMBER)

APACHE GOLD

How do you

- 1 get into the canoe by the fast river?
 - 2 get the shiny thing off the totem pole?
 - 3 find the word you say to the great white spirit to get to the mountain base?
- rattles off NICK HUNT.

- 1 To scare the crocodile show handbag. Paddle the canoe with the branch.
- 2 Go to the totem pole with the ants nest. Wait for ant to bite you.
- 3 Enter the secret word from the smoke signal at the pearly wigwam. (GEOFF BLAKEY)

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

'How do I get the goblet from the troll and the treasures in Gotham?' wonders ALLAN PRICE.

Use the water pellet (provided you have a bottle of water). The pellet will turn into an art critic and cause the parser to overheat. This destroys the troll allowing you to get the jewel-encrusted goblet. Leave museum and go E,S, to jewellers, enter and get tiara.

CUSTERDS QUEST

STEPHEN ROUTLEY asks

- 1 How do I get past the peasants and back to the castle (south) or straight on (north)?
- 2 Can you get out of the tunnels past the panel – if so, how?

- 1 Throw can and the peasants scramble in the mud after it while you escape.
- 2 Wait ten times, and you will be given the lamp, light lamp, E,E, get treasure, W,W, up.

'I have reached the obese time beast and he needs a watch before any other progress is made. I then found the white rabbit and tried to get his watch, but every time I enter his hall, he rips my throat out,' writes ROBERT COLLIER.

The white rabbit takes your box of Turkish delight and hands you a gold watch. He pigs the box of chocs and dies – the snow queen poisoned them. (Thanks to ANDREW EDNEY for the Custerds Quest tips.)

BORED OF THE RINGS

'Could you tell me how to follow the map I bought from the pixie in Bored Of The Rings at Moronas Maze? Also, please tell me the password to Part Three' – ANDREW DOUGLAS.

Go E from the pixie, E again, N,E,E,S,W,S,W,S,W,S,W,S, Trevor and Derek. (STUART SMITH)

SHADOWS OF MORDOR

ANTHONY MOTTERAM is left wandering around the first few locations.

The first thing to do is to find Smeagol. Just wander about and he should come to you. Ask Sam to give you the rope, then enter KILL SMEAGOL, then tie up Smeagol. The ugly creature will plead with you to remove the rope. Enter SAY TO SAM, NO and PROMISE. Untie the rope and Smeagol will follow you. Go to the tree and enter BREAK TREE about four times till the tree is broken. Take the branch and go to the lumpy rock. Lever the rock north, then east with the branch. Go to the round rock and lever it east, then over the cliff. Tie the rope to the lumpy rock. Climb down this rope and you will be in the swamp. (PAUL GOODWIN)

THE BIG SLEAZE

'Please could you tell me how to start the car. I have already blown up the safe,' writes DANIEL SMITH.

Touch two wires together to start the car.

THE BOGGIT

STUART VIZARD has killed the dragon in this CRL adventure but can't seem to do much else and wonders if this is the end of the game.

Go S till you get to the narrow path down. Go down then S till you fall down the waterfall.



Wear the ring. Wait for somebody to open the door, then go W. Examine the magic door, then go W into Part One. Return to Fag End. Open the chest, climb into the chest, drop the treasure. (RAVI SRINIVASAN)

Should you encounter the space cruiser full of aliens it is best to give them what they need, ie the barkenstone. (JOHN WILSON)

BEN WOOD inquires:

How do you light the torch?
How do you lever the cannon with the seesaw?

At the start of Part Two, dig sand to discover the trap door. In the goblin's dungeon, EXAM TORCH to discover the battery and then insert battery into the sword found inside the trolls' cauldron. (JOHN WILSON)

Use the piece of strong wood, formerly the mast, to lever the cannon. (P A DUCKER)

S REFAULT also has two or three problems:

How do you kill the trolls in the clearing?

How do you open the rock door?

How do you start the boat as the starting cord is missing?

To get the trolls out of the way, the theologian's riddle must be solved. Well, the lux is a measure of light and is also a brand of soap flakes. So the first thing to type when you meet the trolls is LUX and hey presto — they turn to putty. Adventurers familiar with The Hobbit will know they must now get the stone key to open the stone door to the trolls' apartment. (SIMON GEORGE)

SEABASE DELTA

BEN WOOD wants to know where he can get into some heavy metal.

The tape is to be found in the computer memory banks. (MATTHEW TUCKER)

THE PAWN

STEVEN YATES has reached the guru but isn't sure how to interpret the wise sage's teachings. He asks 'What does the guru want and where can I find some light?'

Go to the plateau and fill the bowl with snow. The guru gives you a clue about where to find some light. Mix primary colours to get white. (MALCOLM R BUCHANAN)

HAMPSTEAD

CHRISTOPHER EVANS offers his three pennies' worth:

1 'What train do I have to go on to meet Justin Perrier?'

2 'How do I get a job?'

3 'When I try to force the cabinet I am told I can't do that ...'

1 Buy pass and go to Platform One.

2 Wear tie to get in the gentlemen's club. When asked your name, remember who you are pretending to be. Agree to the offer of a job.

3 Use screwdriver to prise open cabinet. (STEPHEN ELLIS)

KEVIN MOONEY is having difficulty getting in and out of the industrial estate.

At the entrance go N,E,E,NE,E,E,NE, then N. Get the bracket and then SW. (NEIL F MCCABE)

Exit with E,E,E,NE,E,N,S into the high street. (R HILLS)

HUMAN TORCH AND THE THING

STEVEN ROWELL wonders how you fire the cannon and how you get into the castle past Blob.

Aim cannon at Blob, fire cannon at Blob. Throw high flame at Blob.

SORCEROR OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE

S ROWELL: 'How do you actually dry the towel?'
Squeeze towel twice.

REBEL PLANET

CHRISTOPHER MORELAND is trying to get to grips with the wrench.

1 'Where is the wrench?'

2 'What is the alloy strip for?'

1 Give tickets to the Arcadians.

2 Bend alloy strip you find in the cargo bay to make a pair of tweezers. (JOHN WILSON)

LAURENCE CRIGHTON wants the name of the chap who sent him through the sewer. It's Saros. (MARTIN DRUMMEY)

URBAN UPSTART

'I've got all that can be got. I've given the fan the £5 and the lager, but nothing happens and I can't get over the muddy sight or get past the fan' asks someone whose name I've mislaid.

Give the fan the lager, take the trip and go to the side of the bank where the service till is. Put the cheese in the trap, insert card and type in the number 1001. Take the £5 and the tape from the hill near the hospital. (DAVID WILLIAMS)

EUREKA!

CHRISTOPHER MORELAND is

obviously a little late for the Domark prize for *Eureka!*, but he's having a go for the sheer hell of it. His queries:

Prehistoric Man

1 What use is the ruby?

2 How do you kill the mammoth?

1 In Kogo's hut, offer ruby.

2 Drop mouse to scare them off.

(DEAN STEELE)

Arthurian Britain

How do you defeat the wolf?

Give the wolf a headache. (B

COATES)

VALKYRIE 17

ANDY GREEN wants to know how to start the plane in the hangar.

To refuel the plane find fuel under the straw and fill tank with fuel. Open the hanger doors before starting the plane. Type TAKE OFF, not forgetting to wear your parachute. (MARTIN DRUMMEY)

WINTER WONDERLAND

'Atchoo! That's me in Winter Wonderland. I can get into the so-called Wonderland and that's as far as I can go. I tried selling the egg to the professor but he just ignored me. Eventually I gave it to him and he disappeared with nothing more than a 'thank you'. So here I am, cold, lonely (even the passers-by won't talk to me), no money, having snowballs banged at me and now eggless. What am I to do? Please help me!' pleads PAUL HARTSHORN from subtropical South Devon.

Sell egg and you find the value of your cashcard (from the hotel room by the foyer) has increased by 150 credits. (STEVEN HOUSE)

MATT LUCAS

IAN BRAZIER: 'How do I open the safe, use note, ignition keys, meat, empty container and tube, and is there anything important about the warehouse?'

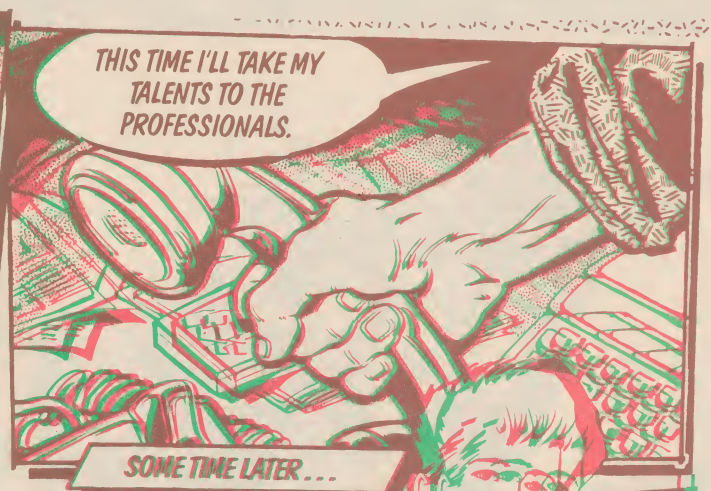
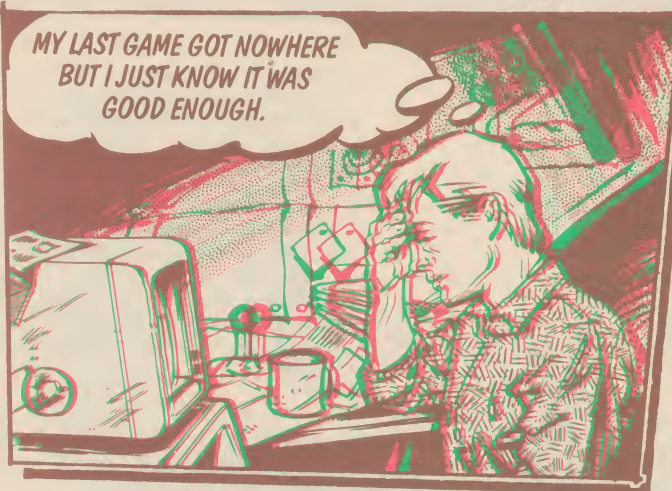
Tip vase, read note (which gives the number for the safe). Take gun. Insert key on boat. The meat is for the alsatians. Go to the petrol station and insert tube. The map is found at the warehouse. (MIKE PARK)

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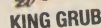
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SPRITE & SOUND

The days of the lonely programming artist are over. Now there's a new breed of specialists – Spectrum painters and sound-chip composers who help the gameplay come to life. RICHARD EDDY reports.

A PIXEL IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS THE GRAPHICS SPECIALISTS

EVERYONE knew the Spectrum had limited graphic capabilities when it was launched, so nobody really tried to push them. There was no demand for graphic specialists – programmers considered graphics just a part of their job.

Probably the first graphic milestone was *Manic Miner*, and everyone went a bit gaga over that. So *Manic Miner* author Matthew Smith designed the graphics for Bug-Byte's next release, *The Birds And The Bees*.

It looked like the Spectrum could make pretty pictures. In the summer of 1984 *Sabre Wulfhit* the screens, and it's still one of most colourful games around. Programmers began realising that graphics could make or break a game and began calling upon their mates who knew a bit about art. Graphic specialists had arrived.

Binary Design is now a large programming house employing 30

people. Its own subdivision Binary Sight has five full-time graphic artists: Steve Pickford, Lee Corley, Nick Speakman, Lindon Brooke, Chris Collins and Jason Nelson, the coordinator. *Amaurote*, one of the team's most visually pleasing games, was the graphic creation of Steve Pickford and took him three weeks to complete.

Says Binary Design's Managing Director Andy Hickey: '*Amaurote* began life, as does any project, with a week-long brainstorm session in which the majority of the graphics are sketched out. From there Steve begins work with Binary Design's sprite designer.'

Graphics are inserted into the game when it's almost finished.

HEAD OVER HEELS OVER HEAD OVER HEELS

Some graphic artists work together with one particular programmer,

specialising in one kind of graphics. Jon Ritman's erstwhile art minion Bernie Drummond was responsible for all the graphics in Ocean's *Batman and Head Over Heels*. His particular style comes from his love of cartoon illustration, and he taught himself art, because he felt conventional teaching methods were limited.

Drummond had never touched a computer before working on *Batman*, and maybe that explains why his style is so unique. He has a free hand in the graphics he designs as long as they fit in with Ritman's scenario – the only constraint he works under is the 24-pixel character blocks in which all his graphics have to be drawn.

And there's money in designing graphics when you're as competent as Bernie Drummond – he hopes to get £14,000 from *Head Over Heels*.

for me we would spend too much time communicating and not enough time working.'

But Priestley has created a distinctive style in his recent games. His well-known large-cartoon style of graphics was born unintentionally: 'When I was developing *Popeye* for DK Tronics, King Features Inc, the licence-holders, demanded that Popeye had to look distinctly like his cartoon counterpart, complete with the right colour socks, hat and pipe.

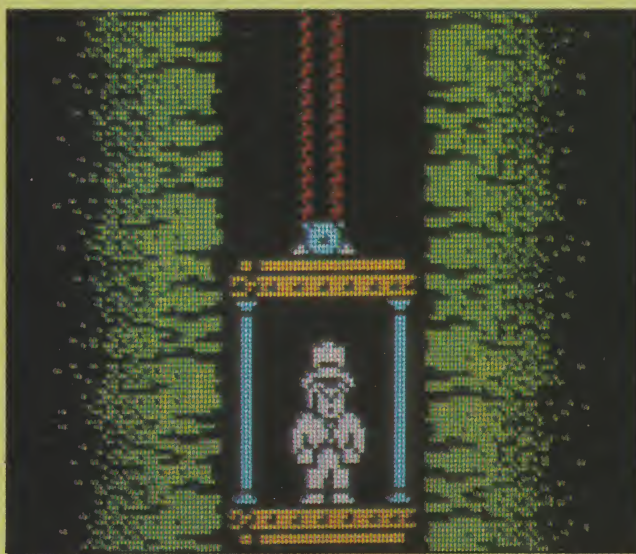
'The only way this could be achieved successfully was to make the figures 11 characters high. Moving something of that size takes up a lot of the screen and so adding a foreground and background (making it pseudo-3-D) was brought in – but that didn't stop the game being slow.'

But Priestley's latest graphics-



Some of the most detailed isometric graphics are in Mastertronic's *Amaurote*, with graphics by Steve Pickford

HEARTLAND



Graphics man Colin Grunes created Firebird's *Heartland* – after he'd developed the look, Steve Whetherill wrote a game around it. The atmospheric graphics save it from being just another maze game.

Sometimes graphic artists design graphics first and then a game is built around it. That happened to Colin Grunes when he designed the graphics for *Odin's Heartland*, released by Firebird. His partner in programming, Steve Whetherill, devised a game to suit the graphics – the result was one CRASH Smash (Issue 31).

Grunes's other works include *Nodes Of Yesod* and, more recently, *Sidewize* for Firebird. He's using the ageing *Melbourne Draw* utility to create the graphics for *Sidewize II*, which he likens to *Salamander* with, he hopes, some animated backdrops. (We'll have a preview on that soon, Lloyd willing.)



manipulation routines allow him to make *Piranha's Through The Trap Door* (the sequel to *Trap Door*) a much faster and more action-packed game than his previous work.

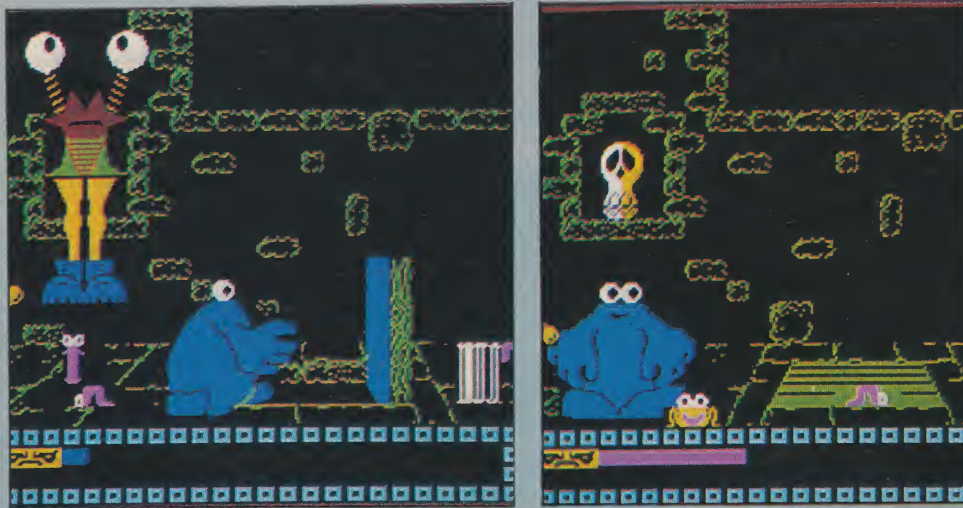
'You can cheat as well,' reveals Don. 'Take jumping, for instance. By the law of gravity you go up slower than you go down. So, the speed doesn't really matter on the up and then on the fall you can afford to move the sprite five or six character squares at a time.'

So that's how it's done...

SPINACH POWER

Some programmers don't need specialists working for them. One such is Don Priestley of *Popeye*, *Trap Door* and *Flunkytame*. He says: 'If I had graphic and sound specialists working

TRAP DOOR



The bigger the characters, the less colour clash is likely – but this often results in slow movement. Don Priestley's latest work, *Through The Trap Door*, seems to have got round this problem, and it's faster and fierouser.

PLAYING FOR BEEPS THE SOUND SPECIALISTS



Dave Whittaker demonstrates how he composed *The Tube's* theme tune on his piano tie

THE Spectrum BEEP command is pretty useless as it stands. But with the advent of the 128K machine, music became much more of an integral part of Spectrum gaming.

The programmers at Probe Software, who write many games for US Gold, have managed to produce a simulated four-channel sound on the 48K for *Trantor – The Last Stormtrooper* (a demo of which was on last month's CRASH sampler). But all they're saying is 'we downloaded it from an Amiga!'

There are many music specialists working on the Spectrum, though. Dave Whittaker's company, Musicon Design, writes most of the tunes that emit from the 128K music chip these days – his recent work includes *The Living Daylights*, *Glider Rider* and *The Tube*.

He composes his Spectrum tunes with the aid of his own driver (a piece of

code that makes the music data run) on an Einstein computer and then downloads the data via a RS232 into an Interface One.

GAME? WHAT GAME?

Whittaker confesses that he rarely sees anything of the games he writes music for – he may be given a general theme or tempo to work from, but after that it's up to him. Occasionally he's given a specific tune to convert; Infogrames once gave him the famous *Chariots Of Fire* theme.

Whittaker's routines can take up anything from half a K for just jingles to 3K, including the *Driver*.

Any favourite tunes? 'No, I usually end up hating them all after I've spent so much time writing them – though occasionally I'll hear a tune a few months after I've written it and think: 'Yes, I like that, it's good.'

'100K IS ESSENTIAL'

In-house music specialists like Palace Software's Richard Joseph can maintain a distinctive house musical style. And what with all the accolades that were awarded to such Palace games as *Stiffip & Co.*, *Cauldron* and *I and Barbarian*, Richard must be pretty chuffed with himself.

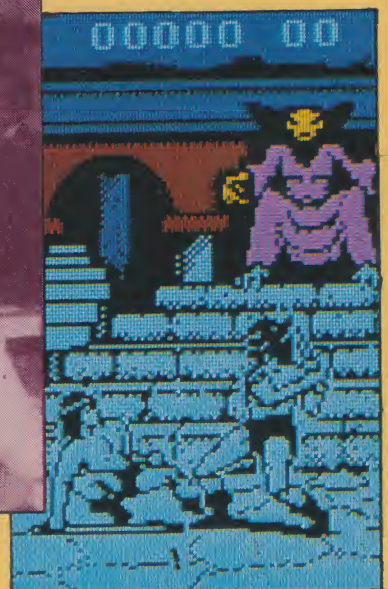
He's a bit of a pundit, too, saying 'the music industry itself is full of rubbish whereas computer music is still in its infancy and it's fun. The 16-bit machines are merely a pointer to the future. I used 100K on the music and FX for the Atari ST version of *Barbarian*, and that's not a luxury – it's an essential.'

There's another kind of sound: speech from a computer has always fascinated programmers and users alike. The only problem is that it eats lots of memory. The most remarkable speech, without the aid of a synthesizer, is that of the *I, Ball* games. The voice of programmer Tim Cross punctuates the game with cries of 'I, Ball! I, Ball! Go for it!'

Cross explains it casually: 'It's quite simple, really. There's a routine I've written and when I play speech through the tape deck into the ear socket the computer stores it as bits. It's usually the last thing I do to use up what's left of the memory.'



Richard Joseph, the man behind the thwacks of Palace Software's *Barbarian*



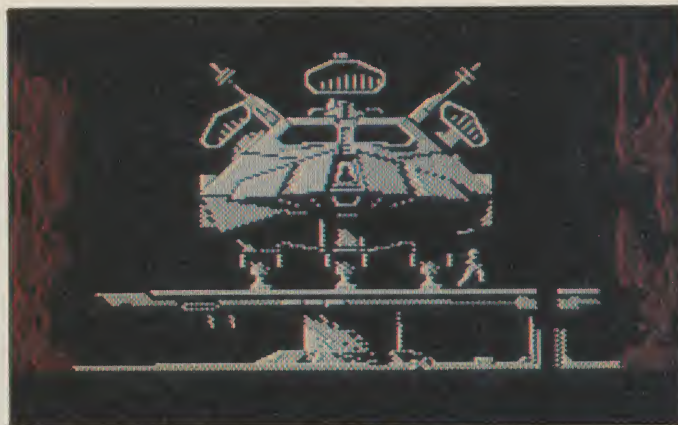
TRANTOR – THE LAST STORMTROOPER

Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Authors: **Probe Software**

Trantor, the last stormtrooper, is abandoned on an alien planet. By activating the main planetary computer held in the terminal building, our hero can escape his imprisonment.

Trantor finds himself near the terminal building's lift, and to progress further he must run, duck and jump his way past a series of vertically pounding pneumatic hammers. All this time his footsteps are dogged by myriad hovering droids and robots, which can be blasted from the air by the flame-thrower that Trantor carries.

To provide further aid, our hero can search any locker that he



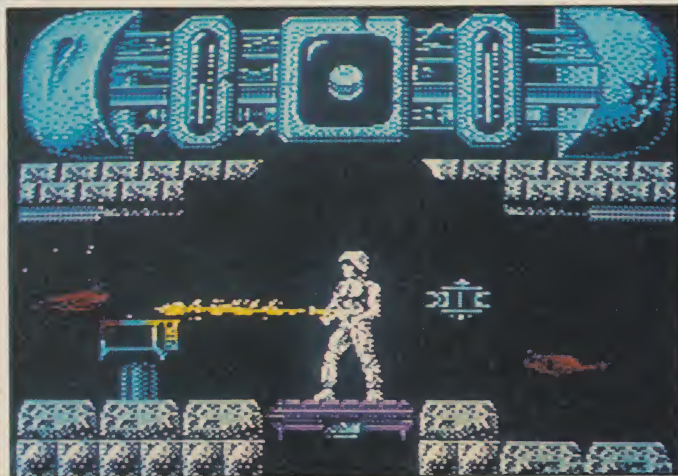
► Trantor storms into a high-tech game of scrabble

MIKE

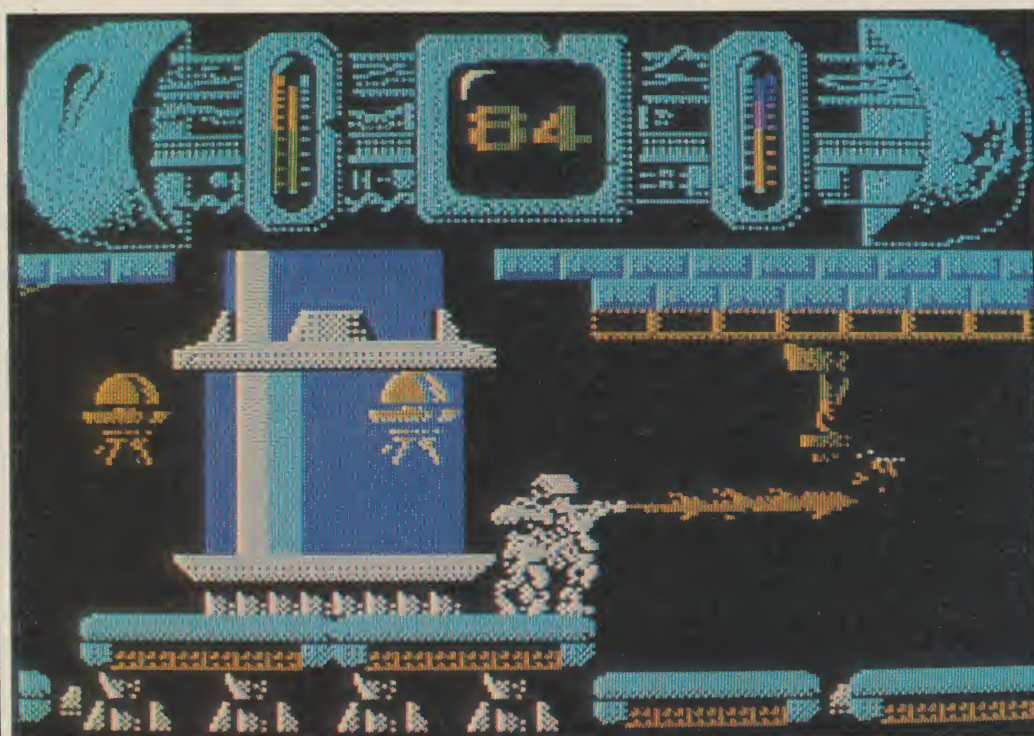
"Trantor has excellent presentation; the loading screen is a work of art, and the sequence just after the game has loaded, where the little man gets out of the space ship, runs along and trips up, is brilliant. I was quite impressed by the in-game presentation, too; the sound is very good, and the graphics are large and well-coloured, though there's an awful lot of clash. But it's annoying that Trantor refuses to jump and fire at the same time, because half the aliens come at you from head height! It's easy but unplayable, and thus unaddictive. I don't think anyone's going to splash out £8.99 for a nice intro demo."

52%

► There's nothing more than meets the eye – Trantor stars graphics, and the gameplay takes a supporting role



► Come on baby, light my fire: Trantor – The Last Stormtrooper



passes; when a helpful item is collected a suitable icon is displayed at the top of the screen.

There are eight terminals in the complex, each of which provides a letter. The letters must be made up into a computer-related word. This can then be keyed into the main computer terminal. (A time limit means that there is no time for dawdling in any sector, but discovering a letter resets the time

BYM

"Trantor has fantastic graphics but it takes some getting used to. Death comes almost instantly after you've started the game, because most of the nasties are out of your reach yet can easily take your energy. It soon becomes tedious starting the game over and over and over and over and over again and again."

68%



clock.)

Once he's assembled the word Trantor is given a beam code which he can use in the beam area to complete his mission.

PAUL

"There's no doubting that the graphical appeal and presentation of Trantor is very strong, but it might not have lasting appeal to match. The biggest problem is the lack of variation. Nearly all the time is spent running and shooting – both of which require little skill – and practically no time at all is required for any problem using grey matter. Trantor would have been much better if Probe Software had spent as much time on the concept of Trantor as they obviously did on the graphics and animation."

82%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: beautiful – large and colourful, though this results in a lot of clash
Sound: brilliant synthesised four-channel sound – even on the 48K version
Options: definable keys
General rating: excellent presentation and graphics conceal shallow gameplay

Presentation	80%
Graphics	85%
Playability	66%
Addictive qualities	61%
OVERALL	68%

PARK PATROL

Producer: Firebird Silver
Retail price: £1.99

Ranger Percy Nutting has lost a marble or two, and you're called in to sort out the mess his nervous breakdown has caused at Papatoetoe Park, an environmental paradise now full of litter, wilful wildlife and incompetent swimmers.

The park is shown on a horizontally-split screen, with its blue lake full of swimmers, snakes, litter and logs, and the red landscape that forms the northern bank inhabited by crusty-backed turtles.

collected, you can move on to the next.

But this isn't as easy, or as safe, as school litter patrol. Your three lives are seriously threatened by obstacles in the water and by the local fauna; the world's first family of homing snakes presents a particular danger. So you carry a supply of Boots' snake repellent: just one capsule flicked into the water clears the area.

Swimmers also cut swaths through the wobbly wetness of the water, but some destroy your canoe if it hits them and others get in trouble and have to be rescued.

Because you missed breakfast,



Since the Park Keepers' Union isn't too strong, your equipment is limited to a small canoe. You can paddle this across the lake in any direction you choose, leaping out whenever anything needs to be collected from the bank.

Every time you gather a piece of litter, a tin can or a bottle, you are awarded points, and one litter icon is removed from the display at the bottom of the screen. When all the rubbish in one level has been

► Firebird scoops Branson's Virgin with the first litter-collecting sim ...

your energy supply is limited and falling. You can replenish your calorie count by rescuing discarded morsels of cheese-and-pickle sandwiches from food-stealing ants (with a well-aimed kick).

And if you keep up all this good work, Percy could be out of a job.



Opponents of sexism in software may be pleased to learn that in *Park Patrol* the player can be male or female – he just has to make up his mind, doesn't he?

CRITICISM

● "This is simply a *Frogger*-type game with sweet little overtones. The monochromatic graphics are nothing to shout about – badly-defined sprites on a cluttered background. The basic idea is to collect every piece of litter on one level in order to progress to the next ultraexciting level and start all over again! The best part is changing from a man to a woman, going around with skirts waving in the park breeze (a bit pesty, that ...). Otherwise, there's not much reason to recommend *Park Patrol*, with its beepy sound FX and boring gameplay"

NICK

27%

● "The old Firebird trick of lengthening the loading time so that the game itself seems superzappy and wonderful certainly works for the first two lives of *Park Patrol*. And it's not too boring because you can go on from the first few pointless screens to more difficult ones with more nasties. The simulation of movement on water works well, and the speed of the swimmers is just right to let the boat change direction. The control of direction in midjump adds humour, but the idea of playing as either a boy ranger or a girlie ranger only has the value of being cute."

BYM

62%

● "I can't understand what all the fuss is about – I can't see anything in *Park Patrol* to explain the praise its Commodore version got. The concept is very simple – and it's very, very easy. Even with as many people and obstacles as possible on each level, it's a doddle to finish. The graphics are nothing to write home about, and the only enjoyable things in *Park Patrol* are the lovable characters – but even they lack variety."

PAUL

55%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: unnecessarily blocky with little use of colour
Sound: rambling tune at the beginning; spot FX
Options: definable gender
General rating: a dull collecting game with a humorous touch

Presentation	53%
Graphics	42%
Playability	56%
Addictive qualities	47%
OVERALL	48%

ROBIN CANDY

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But Robin Candy's **SCORES** is more than a hall of boasts because it's arranged game-by-game – that way you can go directly to your favourite games and see how the rest of the CRASH readers compare with your top score, so you know what to aim for.

And don't worry if you're not the most dextrous binary basher ever to play a computer game – **SCORES** will be compiled a bit differently from other high-score sections.

Each month Robin and the CRASH team will be looking out for the greatest scores on the LATEST games – so even if the game has only just come out your half-complete score may be further than anyone else has got so far. And don't

forget to add the date to your entry, because we'll be following the progress of games through the months from the day they're released to the day someone completes them, and beyond!

And it's not just high-flyers who'll appear, either; besides the record score for each game, we'll publish the scores and names of a couple of other players, picked at random from all the entries, to show the full range of gamers. Everybody has a chance of appearing in **SCORES**! THERE IS NO MINIMUM SCORE.

Each month Robin will pick five winners from all the entries (regardless of their scores and of whether their scores were published); the first one out of the pile wins £40 worth of software of his or her choice, plus a CRASH cap and T-shirt; the next four win a CRASH cap and T-shirt each. So don't forget to tell us on the form what software and T-shirt you'd like if you win a prize!

Send this form with your scores for up to three games to:
**ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES, CRASH, PO Box 10,
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GAME SCORE

DATE ACHIEVED

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- 2
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At the risk of becoming tedious, we're going to point out once again that the decision of CRASH's appointed judges is absolutely final in all respects, so at least if you bribe them you can be sure of getting your money's worth.

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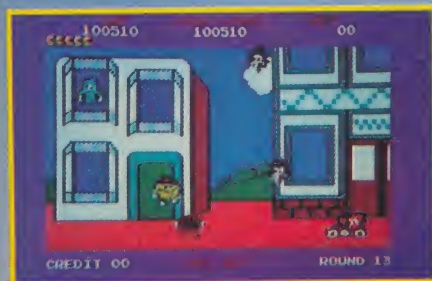
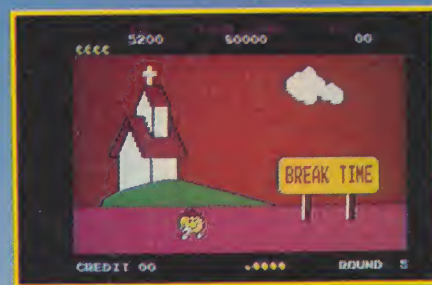
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RED L.E.D.

Producer: **Starlight**
Retail price: **£7.99**

You control three different droids, each with different capabilities; they can be activated in turn, and each sent to one of a series of hexagonal landscapes.

These barren vistas consist of ramps and valleys, chasms and level plains. Move your droids carefully, controlling their movement so they don't tumble to their death or wander into acid lakes: there is a task to be done. Contained within each landscape are energy pods which must all be collected before the droid can go on to the next panorama.

The letters B-O-N-U-S can also be collected to give a bonus play later.

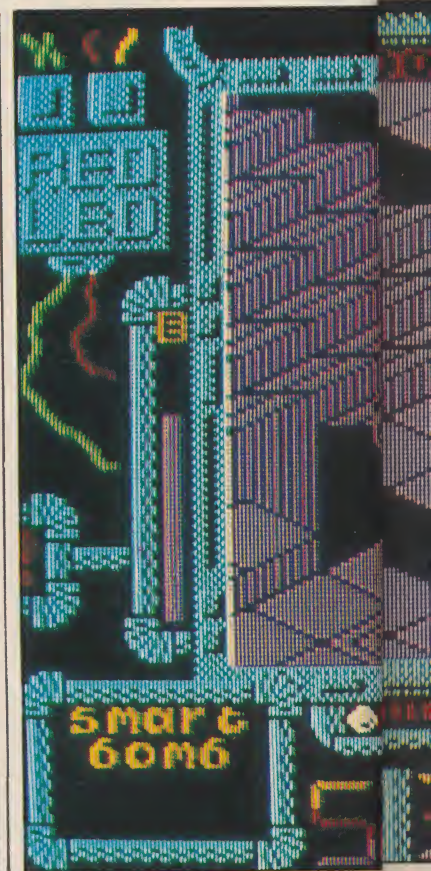
The landscapes are inhabited by

PAUL

"Despite the large play area and the many landscapes, Red L.E.D. has surprisingly little game content. Most of your time is spent going through an endless (and colourless) void; only a tiny fraction of the map actually has anything affixed to it. And to make matters worse all the characters are very small and intricately detailed; thus they end up looking like smudges on the screen. Red L.E.D. offers very little."

51%

► 'Lurid colours in a wild complexity of jumbled lines'

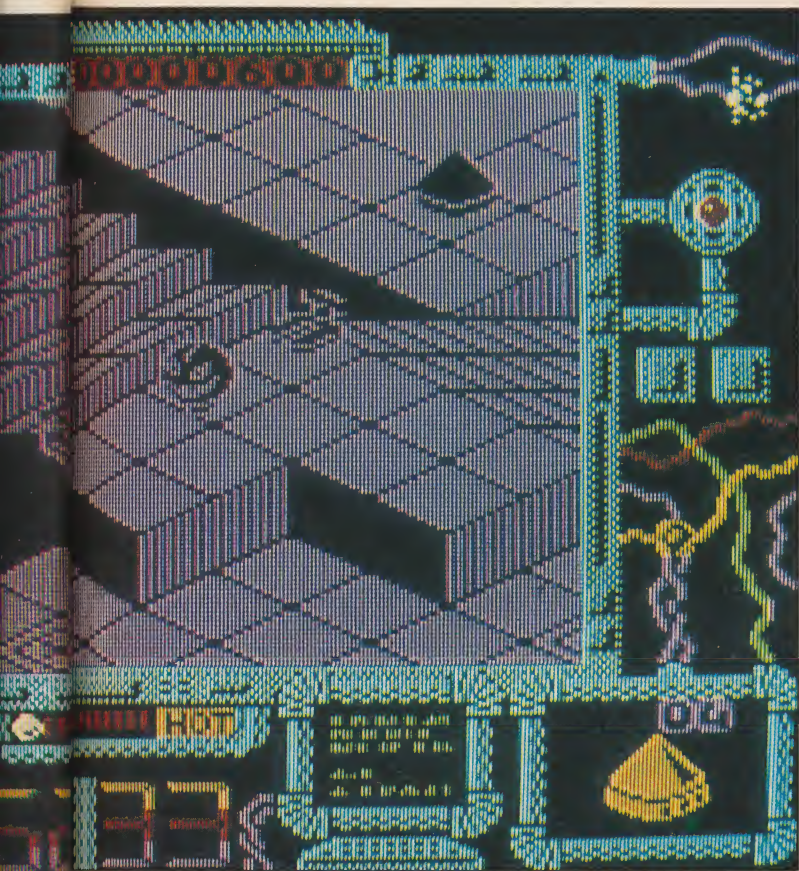


patrolling alien droids who can reduce your own droid's energy level, though it can be restored by picking up items. To help your droids in their quest are teleport

MIKE

"Red L.E.D. is a decent little game for Marble Madness fans the world over. The graphics are attractive; the scrolling is a lot smoother than in many games of this genre, but it still jerks more than it should for a play area of its size. Red L.E.D. is playable and quite addictive, but there's still a nagging feeling that it isn't going to last as long as a full-price product should."

68%



► Red L.E.D.: a simple collecting challenge

BYM

"Some games, such as Firebird's Park Patrol (reviewed in this issue), benefit from slow-response graphics. Red L.E.D. does not! The intricate landscape layouts require a speedy yet controlled movement. Yet after two hours of mastering droid-control, the game becomes playable, if nearly impossible to complete. The lurid colours scrambling all over the screen in a wild complexity of jumbled lines don't make it any easier or more fun. Also, the reasoning behind your losing a small amount of energy for jumping out of the arena and losing a great deal for bumping into a jumbled mass of confused pixels the inlay calls an enemy droid escapes me completely; one happens as frequently as the other. Still, though I find games with many similar screens taxing on my patience, I'm sure many will love Red L.E.D.."

65%

pads, a droid-freeze device that temporarily immobilises alien droids, ice switches that glaciates an acid lake, and time capsules that either extend your time limit of an hour or reduce it.

Collectible smart bombs not only destroy all the alien mechanoids in the immediate area but can also take out enemy droid-generators. That's useful because when all the generators in a landscape have been destroyed, no more alien droids come a-nibbling at your robot's tin heels till the next landscape.

When a screen has been successfully completed a flashing hexagon is shown on the main landscape map. Link the far left landscape to the far right landscape with a series of such hexagons and victory is yours.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: mainly monochromatic, good scrolling
Sound: tune and FX, but nothing stunning
Options: definable keys
General rating: a limited but enjoyable *Marble Madness*esque collecting game

Presentation	76%
Graphics	60%
Playability	67%
Addictive qualities	63%
OVERALL	61%

WHITE HEAT

Producer: **Code Masters**

Retail price: **£1.99**

Author: **Mark Bulldock**

There's no escaping aliens – in *White Heat*, the three horizontally-movable bases under your control come under attack, each in turn, from 72 waves of aliens.

The attackers that make up each wave have different, idiosyncratic movements: some rotate in eccentric fashion, others zigzag sharply across the screen, others dive-bomb your installations. As they approach, they release blasts that you must try to avoid, because contact with the aliens or their fire destroys your base and you move on to the next of the trio. A warning is given when only one of your bases remains.

Each base is equipped with a blaster that can fire single shots at marauders, destroying them to produce point packages that are displayed at the location where the alien was annihilated. Accurate and speedy shooting is rewarded with higher points.

● "My goodness, we do seem to be going back to our roots: after all the Breakout clones in the last few months and the *Marble Madness* madness before that, it feels like the software industry is starting all over again. What struck me first about *White Heat* was the strange alien-formation movements. The individual graphics are detailed and colourful, with smooth animation to match. But there's not much you can say about games of this genre, because they're basically the same – very unoriginal."

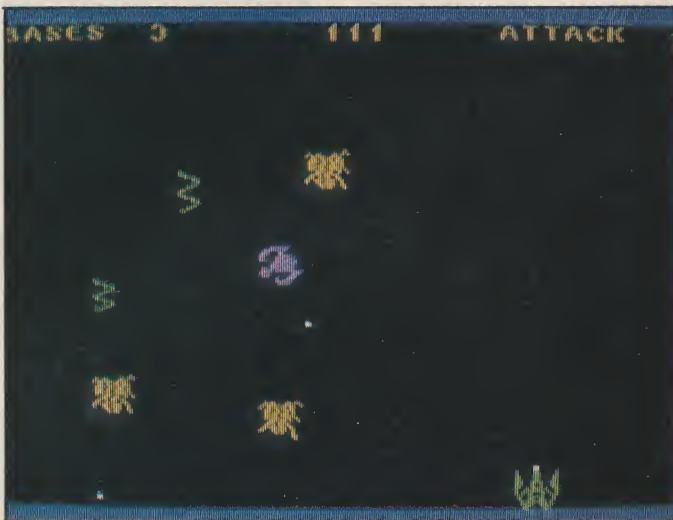
PAUL

32%

● "I thought *White Heat* was trying to be funny – but it isn't. It's desperately trying to be an addictive shoot-'em-up but fails pitifully. The action races along at the pace of a snail on crutches, and as you're only allowed one bullet onscreen at a time it's incredibly frustrating. *White Heat* is a good reason to pay more."

RICKY

15%



► *White Heat*: a shoot-'em-up where fire power is so restricted you can hardly even shoot 'em up

If you are too hesitant in firing, the menacing creatures mutate into more deadly beasts with speedier actions. Near its moment of transformation, an alien takes on the complexion of a fresh boiled lobster: be warned.

CRITICISM

● "*White Heat* is the most simplistic, primitive and dull game I've had the misfortune to play in a long while. It may appeal to a few people, as it did to me, for a very short time just because all you have to do is blast things – but soon it's tedious."

BEN

5%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston
Graphics: simple but quite colourful
Sound: grating tune and nauseating FX
Options: definable keys
General rating: a very poor shoot-'em-up

Presentation	43%
Graphics	22%
Playability	26%
Addictive qualities	26%
OVERALL	17%

JACK THE NIPPER II IN COCONUT CAPERS

Producer: Gremlin
Graphics
Retail price: £7.95
Authors: Gremlin in-house

Regretting that he'd never travelled British Airways, Jack The Nipper has leaped from a plane in midflight, followed by his harrassed father. Their James Bond-like tumble deposits them in Jungleland – not much fun for an infant, you might think, but remember this babe's so tough he can change his own nappy without finching.

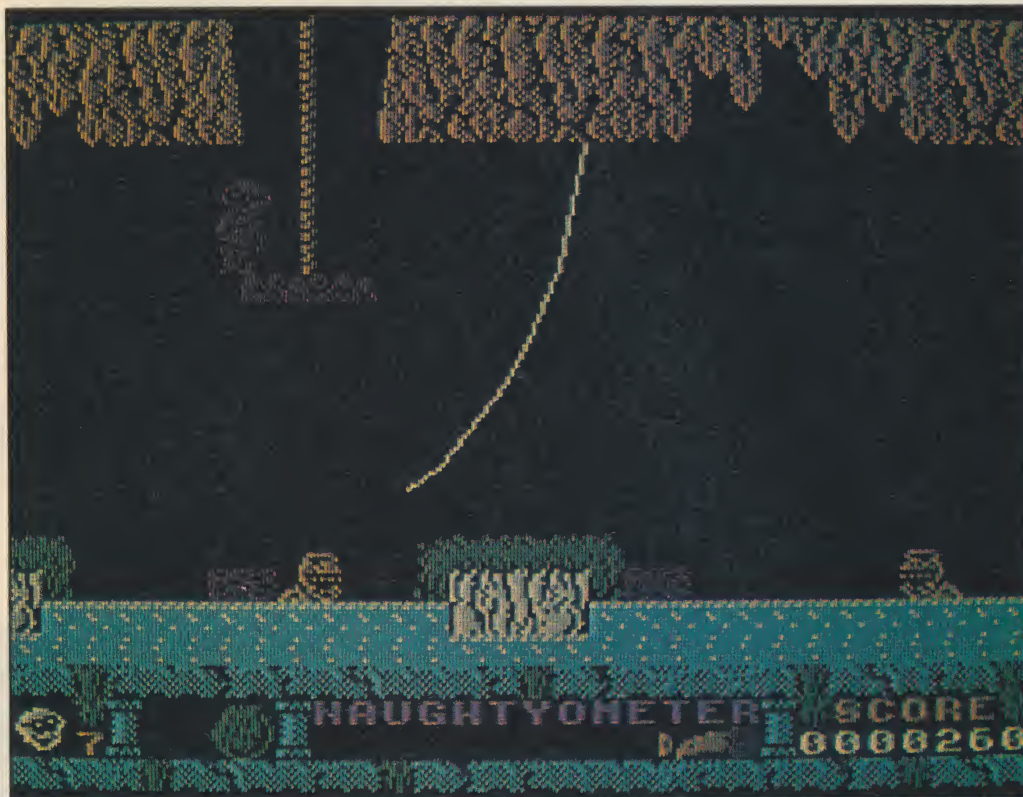
Separated from dad, Jack sets off on a toddle, causing mayhem as he progresses through trees, cavernous halls, and underground passageways.

Ladders, platforms, ropes and slides are all there to help Jack move, taking him to higher and lower levels and far-flung pockets of this arboreal empire. But he must be cautious when using them, as a tumble from the upper reaches is more than jungle Jack can take.

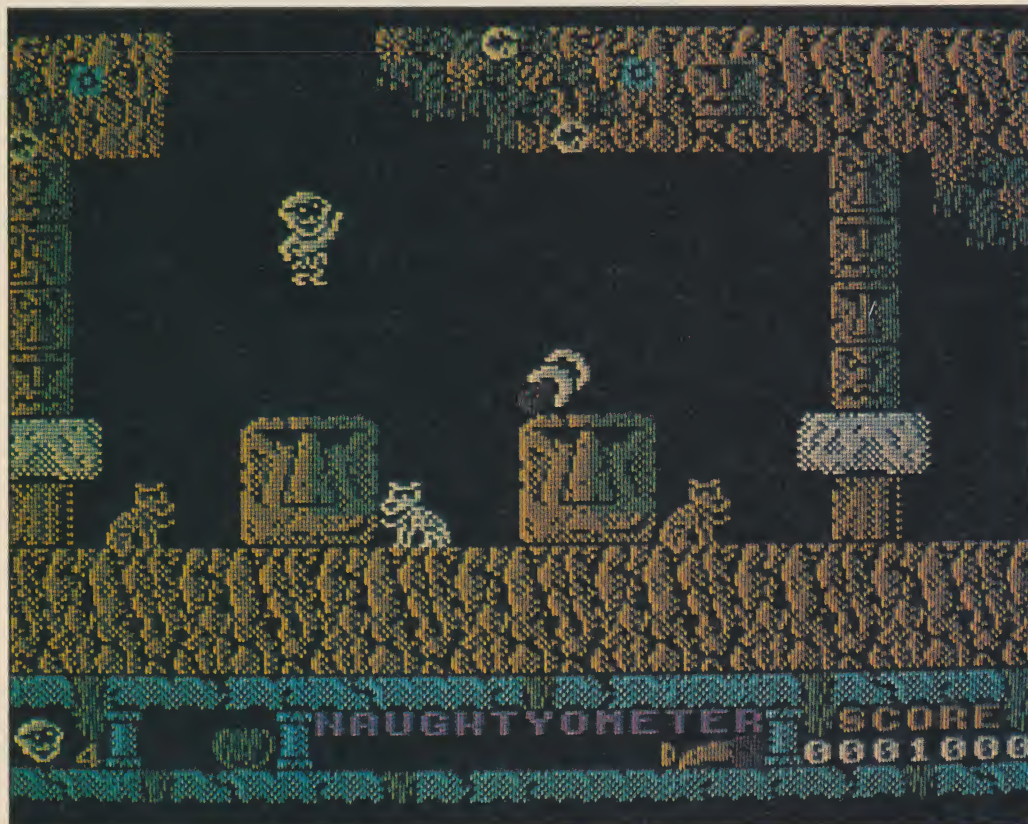
As Jack makes his way, he discovers that not everything is predisposed to his chubby-cheeked presence. Bats, birds,

white elephants wearing shades, hippos in Raybans and sour-tempered scorpions are all out to give our wee man the touch of death.

The warriors of a native tribe are also irritated by his appearance and seek to find their spears some work. Fortunately – though the



▼ A rare snap of Cameron's colonial babyhood



▲ Even the Darlings of Code Masters are crinkly compared to Jack The Nipper – and he keeps on nipping in Gremlin's hilarious *Coconut Capers*

PAUL

"Coconut Capers is a superb follow-up to Jack The Nipper, and I have only one gripe: Jack just isn't as naughty and reckless as in the earlier game. The problems and solutions aren't quite as apparent in Coconut Capers, and we don't have to be as mean to the locals as we're used to; perhaps Jack has cooled down a bit after being deported from Australia. At first it's hard to relate to the jungle surroundings, but persistent adventuring soon reveals a collection of natives who create a strong atmosphere. And Jack is as cute as ever."

88%

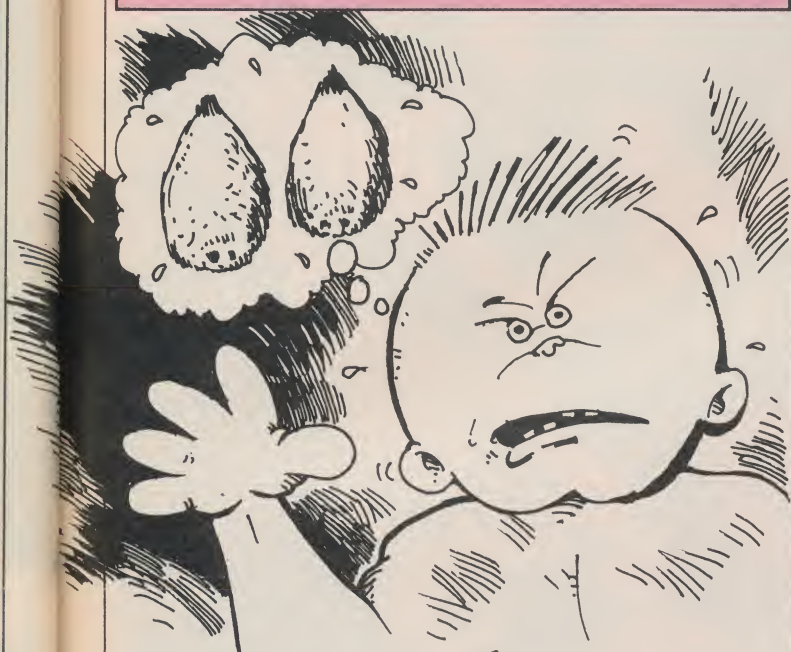
'fortunately' may depend on whether you like small children – Jack can add to his eight lives by collecting dummies.

To further help his cause Jack discovers that he can gather other useful items to make life a little

RICKY

"Coconut Capers is better graphically than its predecessor, with much more colour and decorative surroundings making it more appealing. And luckily this initial appeal doesn't wear off, because there's just so much to explore and discover. Though the puzzles aren't quite as obvious as in the first Jack game, you just have to delve deeper to uncover the hidden surprises of Coconut Capers. It's great played either as a simple platform game or as an involved puzzle game. And whichever way you want to look at it I can guarantee there'll be something enjoyable in it for you."

87%



easier and earn points. Dynamite, grease, honey, onion and woodworm are all at hand to aid this apple of his mother's eye. Explosive green coconuts are particularly helpful – they can take out an approaching danger if carefully lobbed in its direction – and an invincibility sack gives our

young hooligan temporary immunity.

On collection, all objects are automatically divided (by icon boxes) into those that are weapons and those that are naughty, which when used correctly can elevate Jack's Naughtyometer to proportions that would make even the surgical stockings of an SAS-trained nanny twang.

But should Jack's father finally catch up with his errant offspring, a spanking puts paid to his capers and it all ends in tears.

Gremlin Graphics's *Jack The Nipper*, the terrible tot's first appearance, earned 93% overall in CRASH Issue 30 – and he was on the cover.

NICK

"Jack The Nipper is back in full force! This game is as bursting with addictiveness as the original, and it has more added attractions. But some of Jack's new adventures have been copied from other games. For example, you can travel in a coal truck and that's out of Roller Coaster; in the river scene you can cross on logs (Dynamite Dan); the basic layout is very similar to Jet Set Willy. Still, this doesn't spoil the enjoyment you can get out of Coconut Capers. There are some really good spot FX and a good tune at the start of the 128K version. Colour is used well and the graphics are excellent, though the animation is a bit jerky. Coconut Capers is a fantastic follow-up with plenty of playability, so snap it up while you can"

85%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: colourful and detailed with great animation
Sound: fairly good title tune and spot FX
General rating: a superb continuation of Jack The Nipper's exploits

Presentation	82%
Graphics	88%
Playability	89%
Addictive qualities	86%
OVERALL	87%

CALL ME PSYCHO

Producer: **Pirate**

Retail price: **£1.99**

Authors: **M Hartley and P Scirin**

Holding the world to ransom for £100 million, 20 BMX bikes and a bucket of shiny pebbles is all in a day's devilry for that atrocious academic, Professor Hans de Jaberwocky.

But his threat to gungify all those not wearing protective clothing is sufficient to spur Psycho, the humanoid droid, into altruistic action.

If this minor mechanoid is to save the likes of you and me from conversion into so many bowls of Bird's Dream Topping, Psycho must combat the robotic opposition created by the degenerate don.

This clique of dangerous devices includes Edgar, unarmed but with feet and hands that have been graded as lethal weapons by the Bognor police department; Grez Bret, a gun-toting 'bot; Bazooka Fred; and loony Chris.

Psycho must not only do his best against these unpleasant constructions of circuitry, but must also avoid the missiles, preprogrammed tanks, time bombs and mines that litter the place. To touch any of these induces in the droid a nasty attack of death, and he has but three lives.

Our daring rescuer can get some help by picking up the assorted weaponry – a pistol, bazooka, M-16 rifle and flame-thrower – that he finds. Each weapon has a limited supply of ammunition, but Psycho can increase this by touching extra arms caches.

Points are awarded for every opponent that Psycho consigns to the scrap heap, and the running total is increased by collecting junk food, milk shakes and emptied lager cans. Releasing prisoners swells the total even more.

Given a little personal living space, Psycho can begin to dismantle the series of doomsday devices that threaten our molecular stability. He does this by shorting each mechanism's power supply.

Once this is done, the heroic droid can make for a friendly submarine to discover the location of the next device. But should Psycho try and beetle prematurely

to the sub before he has deactivated a device, he is penalised for his precociousness and is returned to his starting point.

CRITICISM

● "Perhaps this game should have been called *Call Me Cobra*, because it sure seems the same as Ocean's game – well, graphically anyway – even down to the hamburgers and megaweapons. And this conceptually boring game adds nothing new to a well-worn mindless genre. The gameplay suffers mostly from unresponsive controls and slow animation, both of which reduce its addictive qualities. Surprisingly, with games of this type a fair amount of thought is required when jumping around the platforms, and a map would be very useful."

PAUL

41%

● "This is a real waste of time. The program is full of bugs and the gameplay is pathetic. The sprites have been badly defined and after a while it gets hard on the eyes. Call Me Psycho looks like a homemade job, and a very bad one at that. There are now so many games of this genre that when another one like this comes along it is simply a waste of time and money."

NICK

25%

● "Call Me Psycho makes a refreshing change from the rest of the shoot-'em-ups we've had this month. It isn't the wildest thing I've seen recently, but playable, reasonably addictive games at this price are not readily available."

BEN

74%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: slightly jerky but quite well-defined

Sound: nothing special

General rating: pleasant, but not polished enough

Presentation	52%
Graphics	55%
Playability	50%
Addictive qualities	58%
OVERALL	47%

► It takes a droid to save the human race in *Call Me Psycho*



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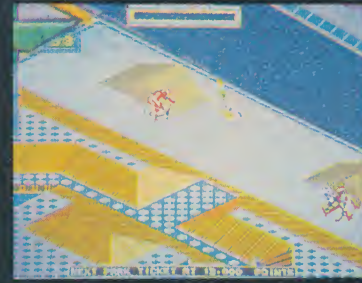
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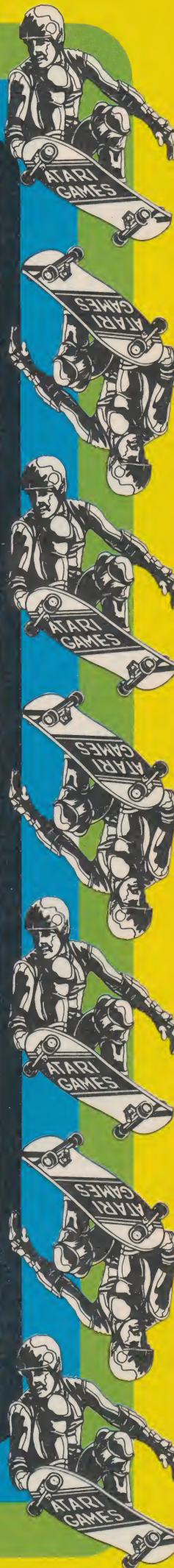
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Screenshots from arcade version



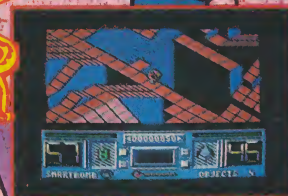
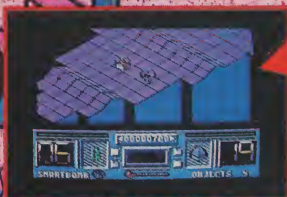
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IF you haven't heard of King Grub yet, don't turn the page – just thank your lucky stars, because King Grub is the disgusting CRASH cartoon character who makes Fungus The Bogeyman look appetising. (He's on page 100 this month.)

But if you've got a really strong stomach, you can join in the Grubbery and write a script (or at least an idea) for King Grub.

All you have to do is write down what you think King Grub should do and say in his February strip – remembering that the strip is about four frames long, so the King can say up to four distinct lines, and that there are no other regular characters (apart from the flies).

If you can't work out all the words, just send in a rough idea of what King Grub might do and say, and you could still win the prize.

The entries will be judged by Markie Kendrick, who draws King Grub, and Gordon Druce, who has a revolting imagination and

eggs him on.

The **winner** will have his King Grub script used in CRASH Issue 49 (February 1988) – and he'll receive the original artwork of that strip, autographed by the artist and framed by, well, a picture-framer. He'll also receive a King Grub T-shirt to nauseate his family and friends.

Five **runners-up** will get T-shirts too.

Send your King Grub scripts on an old sock... sorry, a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope, remembering to give your name, address, and T-shirt size (M or XXL), to: **THE TRULY DISGUSTING KING GRUB COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**. As usual, the decision of CRASH's appointed judges is final and no arguments concerning the outcome will be entered, and if you do try to argue, well, just remember King Grub is not something to be sat on by on a dark night.

ATV SIMULATOR

Producer: **Code Masters**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Tim Miller**

Put on that crash hat, squeeze into those squeaky leathers and buckle on your boots – it's time to scramble aboard your chubby-wheeled All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and head for the roughest, toughest, meanest scenery you can find.

You can take runs against the clock on obstacle-littered courses that spread themselves over sand dunes, grassy land, snowscapes and dirt tracks.

Many obstacles require careful

negotiation – if your ATV gets stuck you lose valuable time attempting to free its wheels. Speed is crucial, not only in your race against the clock but also in determining your success at negotiating hazards. Fastest is not always best. Tackling even the most innocuous obstacle, such as a small rock, at the wrong velocity or in the wrong manner can rip your grip and buttocks from handlebar and seat and propel you in an elegant swallow dive through the air.

And there are some strange obstacles which you have to drive into to believe...

The ATV can do wheelies, which

BEN

"Surely the programmer intended this as a mickey-take of all the other racing games? Perhaps not, but I haven't had such a good time trying to complete six laps of lunacy in ages. There are some novel uses of hard surfaces which make life hell – ever tried to get a four-wheeled bike off a beach ball that's being bounced on the nose of a seal? My only real niggle is that ATV Simulator is much too easy; there should be a lot more levels to give it that extra bit of lasting appeal. I wouldn't pay two quid for a game that would only keep me occupied for a couple of hours."

59%



► **ATV Simulator: taking the mickey out of racing games?**

NICK

"Wow! It's Kikstart on an ATV. Control is a bit hard at first but once you've got the hang of it the game's great fun. The graphics are adequately defined and colour is used well but the sound isn't very good – there's a nice tune on the title screen and between levels, but only gritty spot FX for the motor sound. There's also a gameplay problem with the time limit: climbing back onto your vehicle is very time-consuming. ATV Simulator is a thoroughly addictive game and a favourite of mine because I'm the only reviewer that can get to the water level. HA!"

88%

PAUL

"Well, it's about time someone had a go at Kikstart on the Spectrum – and though this isn't as playable as the Commodore classic it certainly has all the humour. Where ATV Simulator fails is in the number of 'impossible' situations and the frequency with which they appear – many times I lost control of my bike, or the ATV just reappeared on the screen out of my reach. The animation of the driver and his vehicle is brilliant and realistic, especially when you're trying to pull the bike out of a hole. There's no doubt that lots of time has been spent making ATV Simulator aurally and visually appealing, but you've got to have more to a game than slick presentation."

50%

SUPERNOVA

Producer: **Players**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Anthony Bailey**

For every holidaying robot who wants to toast its circuits, the Supernova Hotel on planet Antares is the only place to be. There's a snag, of course... money. Such a stay doesn't come cheap, but ROBOT, an impecunious automaton, decides to take advantage of the lavish facilities anyway.

At the end of his stay, ROBOT can't pay his bill, but till he does he can't leave Antares. With homesickness welling inside him, the freeloader knows he has to accumulate cash.

ROBOT begins the monetary

quest in the main reception and administration areas of the hotel. From here he can pass through unlocked doors, and use lifts to reach other sections of the hotel; they include a security room with a safe, an arcade-game room, a

BEN

"I'm very surprised Supernova wasn't snatched up by some budget label ages ago; it looked excellent as homegrown software about a year ago. It's nice, too, to see that it's still appealing and compelling, which isn't so usual for budget games of this genre. The presentation's great; a good tune plays throughout the game, nice screen layout and some pretty graphics help. Recommended..."

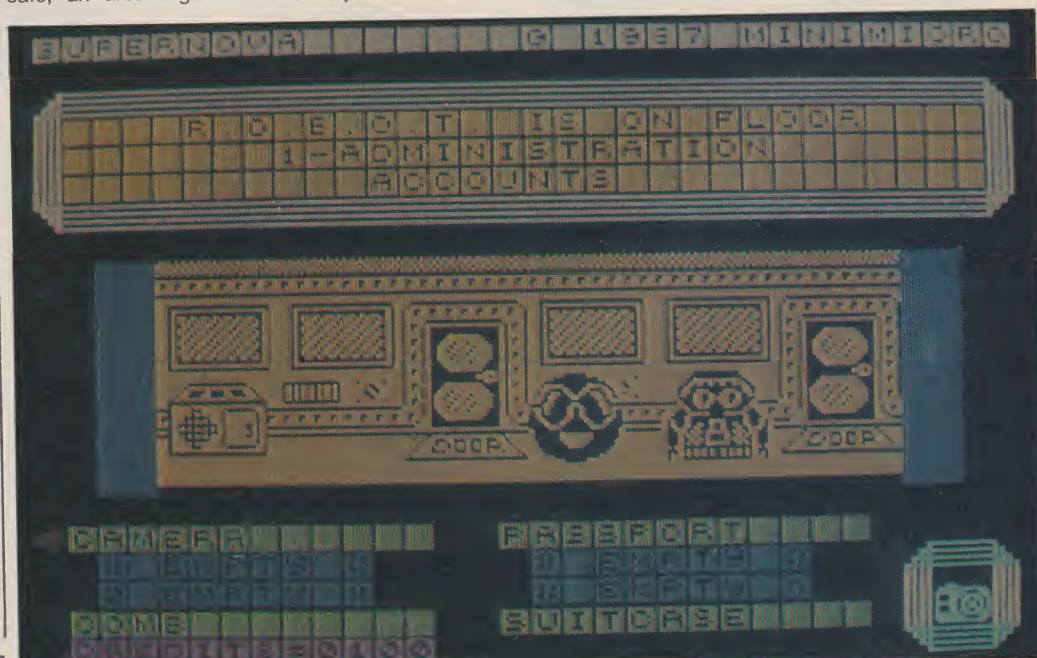
74%

► **Keep searching for those elusive funds or you'll have to wash the dishes...**

NICK

"The graphics really are good, with the little ball-like character moving well, though the scrolling is a mite jerky. The different levels and objects spice the game up and boost addictiveness; I especially liked the arcade level. Supernova is a brilliant game, let down just a touch by its speed and sound."

74%



help it climb steep surfaces, and jump, which provides you with extra lift as you tackle a ramp.

But sometimes not even such skilful manoeuvres can save you from a tumble. If this is your fate, recover quickly, run back to your vehicle and remount it with all the daredevil panache you can muster after a bone-jarring fall.

If you manage to complete a course within the time allowed, and with sufficient fuel remaining, you move on to the next viscera-vibrating track:

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: well-defined and reasonably colourful, but a bit jerky on the scrolling

Sound: good David Whittaker tune with neat FX

Options: definable keys

General rating: an amusingly entertaining and playable biking game of dubious lastability

Presentation	78%
Graphics	69%
Playability	65%
Addictive qualities	59%
OVERALL	66%

sports hall, a chemist's and stationer's and, importantly, the guests' bedrooms. ROBOT can enter locked rooms only after finding the appropriate key.

In some of these rooms are lockers that contain items useful in the quest for increased funding. ROBOT can access lockers, examine their contents, take and carry up to eight items at once. These objects can include door keys, food, flour and glasses.

Supernova first featured in CRASH Issues 29 and 30, as homegrown software.

MIKE

"I enjoyed Supernova when it first came out, but now the poor music and graphics on a small playing area disappoint me."

47%

COMMENTS

Joystick: Kempston

Graphics: mainly monochromatic but pleasantly attractive

Sound: good tune

General rating: a refined, if slightly dated, puzzle game

Presentation	65%
Graphics	60%
Playability	66%
Addictive qualities	64%
OVERALL	65%

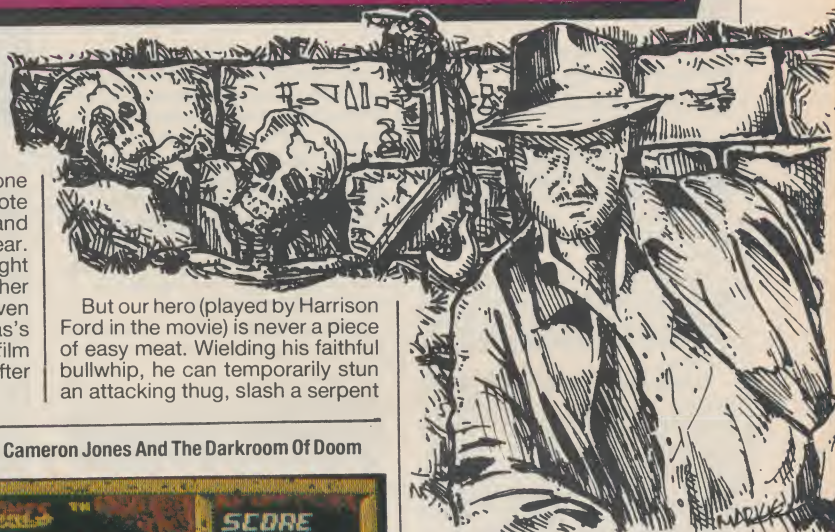
INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM

Producer: **US Gold**

Retail price: **£7.95**

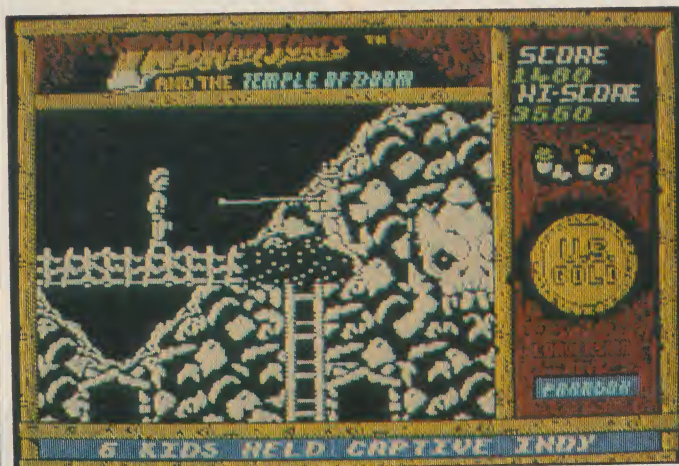
Authors: **Paragon**

The sacred Sankara Stone that protects a remote Indian village is stolen and all the village children disappear. That's no bad thing, you might think – but Indiana Jones has other ideas in this licence of Steven Spielberg and George Lucas's massively successful 1984 film and the Atari coin-op, hereinafter referred to as *IJATTOD*.



But our hero (played by Harrison Ford in the movie) is never a piece of easy meat. Wielding his faithful bullwhip, he can temporarily stun an attacking thug, slash a serpent

► It's that whip in full, courtesy of Cameron Jones And The Darkroom Of Doom



Nine hapless babes have been imprisoned and forced to dig for precious stones beneath the evil Pankot Palace by the thuggee death cult. In the caverns, ladders connect levels and narrow walkways lead to distant sections. Here Indy encounters a myriad of dangers which can take out one of his five lives – a kiss from a snake kills, thuggee cultists and their masters can beat Indy into oblivion or destroy him with a well-aimed shot.

MIKE

"IJATTOD is essentially dull, like the arcade original. I can understand some people enjoying its simplicity, but that's half the reason I don't like it. The graphics are poor, with the score line difficult to read and the playing area unattractive. The odds are stacked against the player, even more than in a normal game – the thug guards have roughly the same amount of kill power as you, but there are millions more of them, which makes it just a teensy bit tougher!"

52%

BEN

"The people responsible for the game plan have got one thing essentially wrong: Indiana Jones is hard, y'know, mean 'n' butch 'n' muscular (he is, after all, played by Harrison Ford), so it's pretty unlikely that anyone he hits with his megadeath-dealing whip is going to get up again, isn't it? It's incredibly frustrating having to nudge a thug guard off a cliff to kill him – whatever happened to violence in computer games? IJATTOD is good fun for a while, but I wouldn't recommend it strongly."

67%

and crack away the locks on the children's cell doors.

When all nine little darlings have been rescued, Indy can reach a tunnel that takes him deep into the earth. Again he must defeat the thuggee guards, as well as a giant and flitting bats. Missing rails and jumps can cause a derailment as Jones rides downward in a mine car that isn't even up to British Rail standards.

If Indiana survives this hair-raising excursion he finds himself in the Temple Of Doom, where the Sankara Stone is placed resplendent with deadliness before Kali, the four-armed goddess of death. Jones must take the stone and escape with it, deeper into the mine's dark caverns where he has to recover another three stones and escape across an insubstantial rope bridge – just as in the film.

RICKY

"The great colour and graphics of the arcade game cover up the actual gameplay, but with the Spectrum conversion the gameplay is the first thing you notice. And it's not impressive – the first level can become frustrating if you're not quick enough with the whip. IJATTOD is OK, not the sort of thing to rush out and buy but certainly worth trying your hand at."

76%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: large, mainly monochromatic and slightly jerky

Sound: no tune, reasonable FX

General rating: a coin-op conversion with little gameplay and some frustrating difficulties

Presentation	68%
Graphics	62%
Playability	62%
Addictive qualities	66%
OVERALL	65%

HOLIDAY IN SUMARIA

Producer: **Pirate Software**
Retail price: **£2.99**
Author: **Sam Garforth**

With package holidays in vogue this month (see the review of *Players's Supernova*...), here's another game with a moral for joyous travellers.

Never, ever, EVER go on a package holiday with Costa Galactic Travel – they'll go bust and leave you on a place like Sumaria.

That's where Sid is stranded – a planet under compulsory purchase and soon to be destroyed. Sidney's only chance of leaving this doomed world is to find the Grail Of Gackara and use it to fire up an ageing matter-transporter. This accumulation of geriatric electronics is hidden in one of Sumaria's castles, but the historic piles are populated by poisonous bats and minotaurs. If our troubled tourist lets them get too close, they nick one of his lives.

Sid's sole chance of Grail-

grabbing is by making like a *Blue Peter* presenter and using objects he finds as he shuffles and jumps through the obstacle-ridden castle rooms. Only one item can be carried at a time, but this could give vital information about nearby monsters, or provide protection. A sword kills attackers, the cloak frightens them away, dropping a clock freezes time, and teleporters transport Sid to other sections of the Sumarian kingdom.

And there's only Sumarian minutes to go before the planet is lost.

CRITICISM

● "Well, I knew that this would happen – that as soon as CRL released *3D Gamemaker* (reviewed in *CRASH* Issue 43) there'd be a rush of rubbish little 3-D games. Here the graphics are thoroughly trashy, bugs appear all the time, gameplay is at its minimum, and the sound – well, the sound could be made by a



► Of course, there's always Majorca instead...

orang-utan on a ZX81! And the character set has been defined into really *CHUNKY* letters to polish it all off."

NICK

17%

● "This is a *REALLY* boring game. The graphics are basic forced perspective and the way the character slows down when he passes behind a piece of scenery is unbearable. The tune is awful, and everything that CRL's *3D Gamemaker* doesn't do for you has been done minimally. Even in the budget price range, you can do a lot better than buy this."

MIKE

26%

● "What can you say about this type of game that hasn't already been written? I've seen a few slow and flickery games in my time, but *Holiday In Sumaria* takes the biscuit. Everything is

appalling: sound, graphics, playability, absolutely everything. It is utter dross."

PAUL

4%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: poor forced perspective

Sound: excruciating to the eardrums

Options: definable keys

General rating: a dreadful 3-D arcade adventure

Presentation	29%
Graphics	23%
Playability	16%
Addictive qualities	15%
OVERALL	16%

CALLING ALL BURNERS

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SMASH OUT!

Producer: **Pirate Software**

Retail price: **£2.99**

Author: **Eugene Morris**

Budget *Breakout* addict Commander Zeplan finds himself and his ship trapped in the volcano-like world at a planet's core. Zeplan's only chance of escape is to deploy the

globules of boiling plasma toward the strata of the planet's crust above.

The separate rectangular blocks that make up each stratum are destroyed on contact with the plasma, and for each block destroyed points are awarded. side of the ship as a bat, moving it horizontally, and deflect the

If the ship is moved too lethargically or inaccurately, the plasma is not deflected, and one of the ship's five lives is lost.

Different blocks have different characteristics. Some, when hit by the plasma, change its size and speed; others alter the condition of the ship. If Zeplan does not fall foul of their idiosyncrasies, he may yet progress ever upward through the different levels and once more see the light of day.

CRITICISM

● "This certainly isn't an original game concept, and there isn't much difference between this version and the first hand-held game you could buy. It'd be difficult to recreate this ancient game as something exciting and new, but I can imagine someone developing basic hand-and-eye coordination being attracted to *Smash Out!*'s smooth, colourful graphics."

BYM

17%

● "What is this? Okay, so *Breakout* clones may be back in style, but one of this quality? The control is sluggish, the graphics are simplistic and dull, and though I thought a lot of *Batty 1* rate *Smash Out!* as about ten

times worse than *Arkanoid*. Boring and badly-implemented, it doesn't even try to be anything different."

MIKE

10%

● "If *Pirate Software* keeps on producing dross like this, I can't see the new label staying in business for long. *Smash Out!* is just about up to the standards of a bad type-in listing – but only because of the addition of a screen editor. *Thru The Wall* (free with a rubber-keyed *Spectrum*) looks like a masterpiece in technical achievement compared to this tommyrot."

PAUL

5%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: below-average even in *Breakout* circles

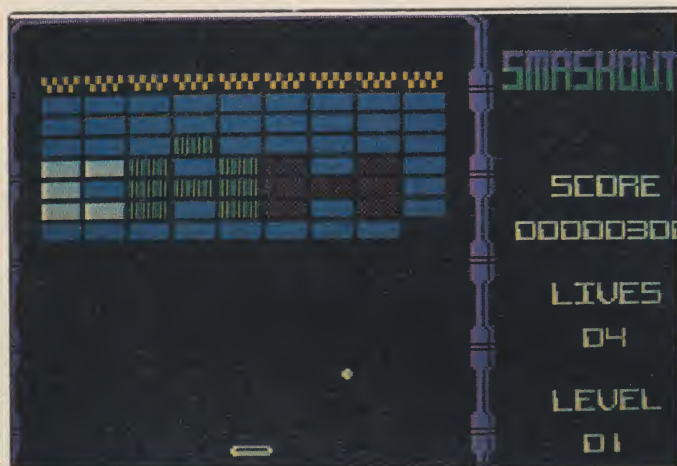
Sound: hardly worth the effort...

Options: screen editor

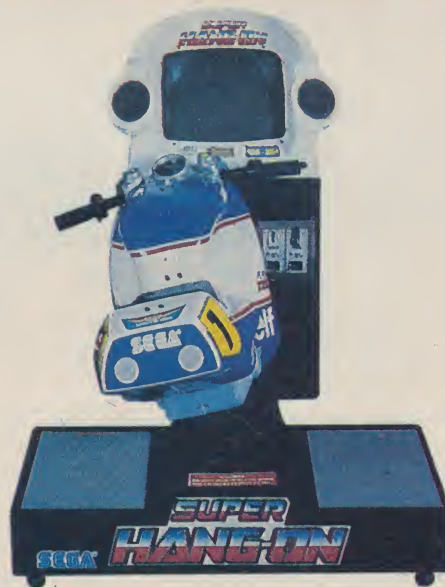
General rating: a clone with little going for it

Presentation	28%
Graphics	10%
Playability	15%
Addictive qualities	8%
OVERALL	11%

► You are trapped in a strange underworld, hemmed in by *Breakout* clones



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DIZZY

Producer: **Code Masters**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Authors: **The Oliver Twins**

The sadistic Wizard Zaks works evil in the realm of Katmandu. To destroy his domination, Dizzy The Egg sets out to create a potion that can spike the warlock's spellmongering.

It's early closing down at the local supermarket, so Dizzy has to scour the land for the ingredients of his enervating brew, mentioned in an ancient recipe. And to gather together these unpleasant articles our ovular friend must walk, tumble and leap vertiginously through graveyards, forest and subterranean worlds full of lethal rivers and falling stalactites. Dizzy can also use magic mushrooms for extra-high bounding power – and all these tricks are useful,



► Dizzy The Egg scours Nepal for his magic ingredients

because points are awarded for every screen he completes.

But this isn't going to be just another Sunday-afternoon bound

NICK

"Anyone for scrambled eggs? Well, if not, don't get jumping too high in this fantastic new game from Code Masters. It's very similar to Firebird's cute Spiky Harold (reviewed in CRASH Issue 29, the ubiquitous indexing minion tells me), which had a hedgehog instead of an egg. The animation is excellent; the graphics are brilliant, with colour complementing them perfectly; sound is well used, with a good tune at the start and spot FX and tunes in the game. I can't find ANYTHING nasty to say about Dizzy, it's just so addictive and neat."

85%

for our eggy hero. Many creatures and objects are under the wizard's control: bats with a cruel touch flutter through the air, Granny Smiths drop from trees toward our hero's noggin, rickety bridges disintegrate underfoot and spiders slip down their silken threads; other scuttlers patrol narrow tunnels... waiting.

During his travels, Dizzy may discover items that he can put to use – but only if he can first solve their purpose, perhaps with the help of the onscreen clues. With such things as spades, bags of gold and oilcans, Dizzy can open up whole new vistas of exploration that take him further in his quest.

When Dizzy has collected all the

RICKY

"Dizzy is an appealing game with enough puzzles to keep your interest going for a while. The graphics are all rather cutesy – it's the sort of game that provokes your mum to say 'Aw, isn't that sweet' – though the number of things that can kill you can become quite distracting. Dizzy is a worthy product"

72%



► An eggstra picture – and we're not yolkng, white?

BEN

"Dizzy may be a little too cute and cuddly for my liking, but there's a great game hidden within those small and furry folds! The average puzzle-solving/arcade adventure has never really appealed to me, so perhaps the puzzles in this one are much more logical – or perhaps it's just plain easy to play. Whatever it is, it's fab. The inlay, like most of Code Masters's, goes a little overboard – the word 'brilliant' appears four times. But it's true: Dizzy is one to have in your software collection."

77%

COMMENTS

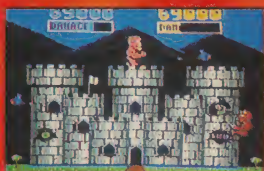
Joysticks: Kempston
Graphics: very good cartoon-type graphics with plenty of colour
Sound: a good tune rattles away on the title screen but there are few FX
General rating: an enjoyable and graphically competent arcade puzzle game

Presentation	79%
Graphics	80%
Playability	79%
Addictive qualities	75%
OVERALL	78%

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YES PRIME MINISTER

Producer: **Mosaic**
Retail price: **£14.95**
Authors: **ODE**

After an undistinguished but eventful political career, Sir James Hacker is inexplicably elevated to the position of Prime Minister. With the competent (if not always straightforward) aid of senior civil servant Sir Humphrey Appleby and the straightforward (if not always competent) aid of Private Secretary Bernard Woolley, Hacker must make the most difficult decisions of his career.

And in *Yes Prime Minister* – a licence from the eponymous TV show – you take the role of Hacker, ensconced in an office full of icons: a telephone (calls report crises in the outside world), an internal intercom, a teletype, an ideas box, memos and a diary.

Hacker can leave his office to make visits to such places as the Foreign Office, the Cabinet Room, or his minions' offices – though they're not always in. (Those Whitehall lunches do drag on...)

PAUL

"When it comes to 'choice' games Mosaic Publishing has the industry sewn up, what with *The Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole* and *The Archers* and now *Yes Prime Minister*. They're all the same – funny the first time, but then losing attraction. Running the country is all very well but none of the decisions you make in *Yes Prime Minister* have any bearing on the game, and I never felt in contact with my public – the action is limited to the confines of the very drab Prime Ministerial office. And after playing all the way through I didn't feel any compulsion to run the country again – especially not for almost £15."

55%

His diary gives a list of meetings, and a desk clock indicates how near an appointment is.

During the in-depth

conversations, frank exchanges of views and wide-ranging discussions that he has with Appleby, Woolley, and other political colleagues such as the Foreign Secretary, Hacker is presented with sets of choices in a text-only format.

Each choice represents a different viewpoint and each has a difference consequence. The choices Hacker makes, 'advised' of course by his aides, affect his popularity in the opinion polls. To check that the voters still love him, this blundersome political supremo can open his office safe and discover his previous day's rating in the polls and his present popularity – on these numbers depends Hacker's future.

MIKE

"*Yes Prime Minister* doesn't hold the interest for long – after just four games I'd seen all the text, and though the rather thin humour works first time round things are very tedious thereafter. I did enjoy the odd parts of the TV series which my overworked schedule allowed me to see, and I find the computer version disappointing. The screen display is bright and functional, but still looks a little unattractive. I'd recommend *Yes Prime Minister* only to fans, and then purely as a collector's item."

49%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: excellent digitised faces, otherwise reasonable

Sound: limited

General rating: there's an interesting idea and some entertaining text here, but not much variety or real interaction

Presentation	77%
Graphics	58%
Playability	70%
Addictive qualities	44%
OVERALL	56%

► Sir James Hacker's office in *Yes Prime Minister* – apologies for the awful wallpaper



► Supersprinting into the sunset in Activision's latest arcade licence

SUPERSPRINT

Producer: **Electric Dreams**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Authors: **Software Studios**

Tear off the L-plates, pull off those furry dice and put to sleep that nodding dog – you're going racing in a *Supersprint* car, burning rubber in this Activision conversion (on the Electric Dreams label) of an Atari coin-op original.

You choose from eight circuits of different shapes and varying difficulty, competing with three other cars over a minimum of four laps.

And there's a two-player option, where the two players can have the track to themselves or face the further confusion of a third,

PAUL

"Games like this are great fun in the arcades with people all around you and sound blasting out of the machine, but an atmosphere like that is very hard to create in the peace and quiet of your own home. And when the game on its own is transplanted into a tiny Spectrum, problems appear. The collision-detection is the worst problem of all; I often found myself stuck on the side of the track but not actually touching anything, which is terribly infuriating. It goes without saying that the two-player option improves the game immensely, but then YOU'RE making the fun, not the game you paid for. *Supersprint* is effective up to a point but you can't do much with such a simple game."

56%

computer-controlled car.

Constant concentration is essential as you steer your car around the tortuous corners of each track, accelerating over the tarmac. Should you collide with the side of the track at a slow speed you are merely delayed; prancing trackside at high speed causes your racing car to explode. A helicopter flies a new one out to you, but valuable time is lost.

On some circuits there are underpasses which you'll have to drive through blind, temporary short cuts that only you can use (to gain time on your mechanical adversaries), and ramps that

collected there's a bonus at the race's end. The bonuses include extra tyre traction, power for greater speed, turbo acceleration and extra scoring potential.

But it's not all plain driving. Oil slicks can send your car into a spin, water slicks delay you, and the tornado that improbably patrols the course sends your car whirling out of control.

When a race is over the times of the first three cars are given, complete with their fastest lap times.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: small but colourful

Sound: limited

Options: choice of tracks,

two-player option

General rating: *Supersprint* is a reasonable conversion, but it lacks the excitement of the arcade race

Presentation	71%
Graphics	50%
Playability	58%
Addictive qualities	57%
OVERALL	58%

MIKE

"I expect *Supersprint* is as good as we're going to get in this genre, but it's still not very good. The graphics are small (like the arcade original's), and though the game is quite playable I didn't find it very addictive, despite good reports of the original. Addicts of the arcade game might find this to their taste, but it lacks a little something."

65%

CENTURIONS

Producer: **Reaktör**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Byte Engineers**

Doc Terror is after a stock of Tyron-Dichromate, a substance that can do more damage to the earth and its ozone layer than even the heaviest user of underarm deodorant.

Max, Jake and Ray are three mere mortals but on donning their Exoframe suits they become incredible fighting warriors – Centurions, fusions of man and machine. And only they can stop the evil Doctor's dastardly deeds.

They begin life as powerless droids, but by manoeuvring itself onto a transformation pad a humble droid is changed into a Centurion.

As our heroes make their way through the landscape surrounding the Weapons Development Centre where the Tyron-Dichromate is held, hordes of malignant creatures come after them, howling for their hydraulic fluids. With their basic blasters, the Centurions can destroy these alien thugs, adding weapon upgrades

when they've destroyed enough attackers to reveal collectible rectangular Quants.

Contact with an ordinary enemy reduces a Centurion's energy, but if Doc Terror himself is encountered and his image falls upon a Centurion, that warrior is returned to droid form. Back to the old transformation pad...

On each level there are six keys, all surrounded by air, sea or land, and only the Centurion with the capability to cross the encircling terrain can reach the key. When all keys have been collected then the next level can be reached.

With these keys the three different rooms of the Weapons Development Centre can finally be entered, and there the Centurions can dispose of the cases of dangerous chemical... by walking into them.

CRITICISM

● "If you want a game in which you can hardly see your character, with trashy sound effects and boring gameplay,



► Play 'hunt the Tyron-Dichromate' in Reaktör's Centurions

then rush out and buy Centurions today. The backgrounds cover up the main sprite terribly (a bit like Wiz...), so you have to strain your eyes just to see what's going on. Reaktör games still have that irritating loading sequence and no loading screen, so the presentation isn't fantastic. Centurions is a no-go area."

NICK 30%

● "If the TV show is anything like the game then I'm jolly glad I've never seen it. Centurions just doesn't work on the Spectrum; all the things that could go wrong have. The graphics use the weirdest masking technique I've seen in a long time, which makes the characters very hard to distinguish from the grassy background. Colour couldn't have been used in a more haphazard way – there's clash everywhere. And it's obvious from the outset

that this is a straight translation from another machine, not at all customised to the Spectrum's capabilities. I just hope you buyers are more responsible about it than the programmers."

PAUL

22%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston
Graphics: shoddy use of colour over uninspiring characters
Sound: good original spot FX but poor tune
Options: definable keys
General rating: a poor licence of a potentially exciting subject

Presentation	48%
Graphics	24%
Playability	26%
Addictive qualities	27%
OVERALL	23%

Are you horrible enough
to go on the

RAY

WAR CARS (CONSTRUCTION SET)

Producer: **Firebird**
Retail price: **£2.99**
Author: **Clive Brooker**

Remember your days of model-car racing, when Dad trod accidentally on the carefully-laid track on the carpet, Mum thought it all made too much noise and the dog did himself irreparable intestinal damage by eating up a car?

Well, forget them – now you can chase an opponent's vehicle

BEN

"War Cars is incredibly simple but extremely compelling – to begin with. The appeal starts to wear off when you realise that the maze layout doesn't change once you've collected your six flags; it's a good thing there's a roadway designer or War Cars would get really boring."

68%

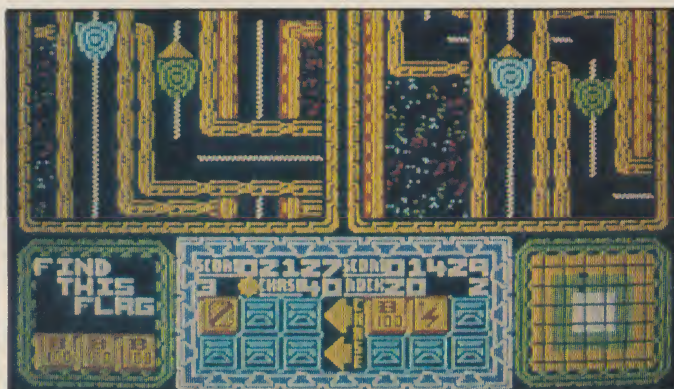
around a racetrack, in hot pursuit along a series of roadways full of angularities and doglegs, all shown in bird's-eye view.

The cars' positions are shown on an overall map, and the area immediately around you is displayed on a split upper screen.

► Is this *Raid Over Spaghetti Junction* or what?

You can block an opponent's route by releasing a boulder, and along the chaseways are flags which can be collected by touch and are worth at least 100 points each.

Should the established track's attraction ever pall, then you can create up to five others by manipulating roadway sections on a design screen.



NICK

"War Cars has the looks, sounds and ideas of the same author's One Man And His Droid and other such games, the only important difference being that here you can construct your own roads. The screen display is neatly set out and the roads overlap nicely, but the title screen is a mite overcrowded and the scrolling menus make it worse."

50%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: jerky but distinctive
Sound: good 128K tune,

Options: the construction set is good, though a little difficult

General rating: an interesting maze/race game

Presentation	54%
Graphics	56%
Playability	56%
Addictive qualities	45%
OVERALL	53%



You'll know soon enough!
Rampage, coming to your home
computer screen, December.

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THUNDERCEPTOR and THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

two games on one tape

Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Ernieware**

This is not going to be a very pleasant job. Disease-infested spaceships are returning to Earth from the once healthy colony on Jupiter's moon, Io. They must not be allowed to reach their destination and spread their sickness.

In *Thunderceptor*, one of two games on this tape from US Gold's recently-launched label GO!, you command one of the craft in a fleet sent to destroy the colonists. Your multidirectional spacefighter carries both Phaser and Super Phaser systems – the latter effective against large spacecraft – and a defensive shield. All these are served by a single, limited power supply, and the energy complement of each can be altered.

On encountering the 'Io-fleet', you are met by waves of attack craft varying in their manoeuvrability and fire power. At some stage large mother ships and fighters appear, and these must be hit many times with Phaser power, sometimes with unerring accuracy, before they succumb. Points are awarded for every craft destroyed.

Meteor storms, satellites and

NICK

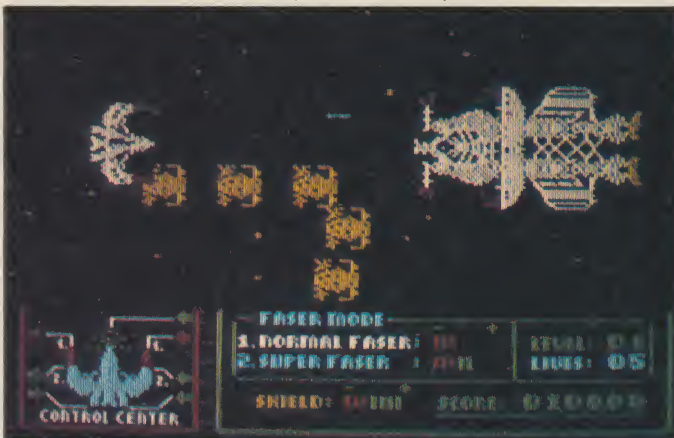
"GO! has really chosen the right name for *The Fast And The Furious* – the gameplay is so fast you don't know what you're doing half the time! The enemies really speed along and firing at them as they go by can be a problem. Apart from the sickly colour, the graphics are well-defined, with some good animation here and there. But the spot FX aren't very good and at the start, where you'd expect to find a tune, there are birds singing (goodness knows why!). And though it's quite original, I doubt this game will appeal to the budding arcade player for long.

As for *Thunderceptor*, I've really had enough of all the recent Zynaps clones. *Xecutor* (reviewed last issue) was just Zynaps turned through 90 degrees, and *Thunderceptor* is simply Zynaps sped up with the backgrounds taken away. But the game is quite decent and the graphics are adequately detailed. Both the screen layout and the way the enemies move are similar to *The Fast And The Furious*; in fact you might think it's just the graphics that have been changed."

Thunderceptor
The Fast And The Furious

82%
69%

► The threat comes from outer space in *Thunderceptor*...



PAUL

"The Ernieware programmers have their act together when it comes to designing pretty graphics, but their problem is knowing what to do with them: *Thunderceptor* is awfully boring and monotonous. Each section contains the same old ships over and over again in slightly different combinations. However, the individual graphics are exceptionally well-drawn and used with animation to match.

The Fast And The Furious is WEIRD; I've seen nothing like it in a long time. The game may basically be your old favourite shoot-'em-up, but the objects used are very strange; besides the usual bats and spiders there are also flying-carpet flights. As with *Thunderceptor*, the basic game construction is very simple and thus there's endless repetition."

Thunderceptor 51%
The Fast And The Furious 68%

MIKE

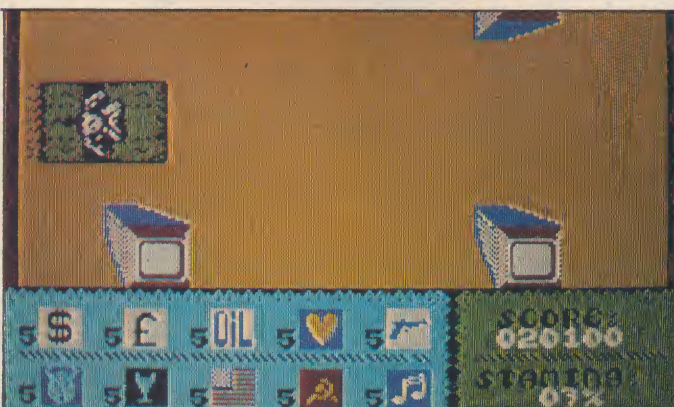
"*Thunderceptor* has all the feel of a well-programmed game and quite a lot of playability – but it doesn't last. Despite its fast gameplay and large graphics, it's simply not addictive.

And a more appropriate title for the other game on this tape would be *The Fast And The Furious But A Bit Unaddictive!* Again, it's very playable for a few minutes, but once you've adjusted to the speed (which certainly makes the game more interesting) and you know the first dozen attack waves, there's very little compulsion to carry on."

Thunderceptor
The Fast And The Furious

58%
52%

► ... but Cam's magic carpet never gets beyond the atmosphere in *The Fast And The Furious*



wrecks also add spice to this space battle.

After completing the first level, you can progress to the next of the five, receiving medals and promotion as you go.

Flying by the seat of your pants on a magic carpet in Old Baghdad while working for the military is the name of the game in *The Fast And The Furious*, on the other side of the tape.

Your first mission is to deliver important papers to a base on the other side of the desert – but there's more to this silicon wasteland than sand, sand, more sand and cacti.

Though the desert is larger than the beach at Weston-super-Mare at low tide, the villains and brigands who live there seem to have no difficulty in finding you. Riding their shagpiles and Axminsters they come at you, and any contact with them, or with the fireballs that they unleash, loses you stamina.

You can return their fire – but be warned; you're not facing just a cutthroat band out to do you down, but also centipedes, dragons, bats and scorpions, any of which can inflict untold damage on even the hardest carpeteer.

You can collect useful items by flying your carpet over them, in a sort of reverse hoovering marked by icon displays.

The objects collected, which include dollars, pounds, oil, hearts, flags, guns and musical notes, can be used in dealings with the villain's leader – he can be found at the end of each desert section. You can placate him by giving him the correct icons, and the result is a rise in your stamina level.

Once your dealings with the despicable rogue are finished, leap once more onto your carpet to do battle on three more levels with more dragons, more no-goods and more danger.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair


Graphics: very fast and quite colourful

Sound: not an awful lot apart from a few bells and whistles

General rating: both are adequate shoot-'em-ups with average lastability

THUNDERCEPTOR

Presentation	79%
Graphics	74%
Playability	65%
Addictive qualities	59%
OVERALL	64%



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THE CRASH CHALLENGE

► Skippy doesn't know what's hit him in the shape of Zynaps Challenger John Kitts . . .

PHOTOS: Roger Kean



DUNN TO DEATH

HI and welcome to the CRASH back-room stadium, the venue for this month's CRASH Challenge. The game is Hewson's *Zynaps* and I'm NICK ROBERTS – I'll be here bringing you up-to-date news of the Challenge as it happens. The Challenge has three rounds – both contestants play a game of *Zynaps* in each round, and the high score wins that round. But the overall champion will have to win two rounds . . .

And now, while we're waiting for the players to arrive, a bit of background on today's game. Dominic Robinson's shoot-'em-up *Zynaps* was a Smash with 91% Overall in Issue 42 and Mike really liked it. Oh, what's this . . . it's MIKE 'SKIPPY' DUNN the intrepid reviewer! Armed only with a tube of styling mousse he strides into the practice room and dives for a copy of *Zynaps*.

After getting to the second level and saving it to disk (for future reference – of course) he's getting in a last half hour of alien-bashing before the equally intrepid Challenger JOHN KITTs arrives from Shirley, his home town in the West Midlands . . .

. . . and here John is now. John

Kitts, PBMer, science-fiction fan and *Zynaps*-player extraordinary. Finally, after the poor CRASH reviewers (accompanied by the indescribably intrepid Barnaby Page) had been waiting in the rain outside the bus stop for ten minutes, John stepped onto the historic tarmac of Ludlow for the first time. (Being a kind sort of person who had two friends who wanted their names in CRASH, John gave me two hellos to say, so hello to Ted Webb and Ben Hynes.)

In the friendly CRASH tradition, the Challenger has been escorted through almost every public house in Ludlow in Skippy's desperate bid to find somewhere to sit and get John so drunk he couldn't tell one control key from the next – but when we finally found somewhere to sit amid the last of the summer tourists, John ordered a triple steakwich (for superstrength) and Coke (which adds life, a bit like 10,000 points).

And so Skippy and John have prepared themselves for the CRASH Challenge – the quest for ultimate dexterity. And after a lot of monitor-swapping and computer-throwing we've finally got the show on the road, and as the crowd roars the two

contestants are stepping into the spotlights. The battle commences.

ROUND ONE

John has one advantage over Skippy – he's got the hang of collecting extra fire power (being an expert at the game). Pow, zap, zap, booom! – Skippy is away. Armies of aliens loom up onto the screen and the fearless Mr Dunn shoots them away with his homing missiles. John, on the other hand, has by now got a target on the screen that enables him to almost treble his power against the enemy.

Skippy's game suddenly improves, and he gets to Level Two with 8,150 points on the clock. This level involves dodging asteroids by the million and shooting the odd alien to smithereens. Skippy doesn't seem to have very good coordination, though – he was blown up by a passing asteroid as he tried to cross the screen. He should be good at that sort of thing; he has to cross the main road in Ludlow on his way home!

John hasn't been far behind in the race for Level Two and now

he's got there with 7,000 after collecting masses of points for extra fire power and aliens. The asteroid-dodging seems to come naturally to John, and he's nearing the end of the level with no trouble.



► Dunn's defeat – another blow for the CRASH collective arrogance



EATH

Skippy, however, is hanging onto his last life and spaceship pulp is nowhere to be seen.

SUDDENLY a band of enemy fighters zooms into view. Poor Mike didn't stand a chance – he's



lost his last life with a shout of '1\$%&#*#*#*!'. And John has entered Level Three with 17,250 points. This level is totally new to Mike, as the look on his face showed when he staggered over to John's red-hot Speccy for a glimpse of how *Zynaps* SHOULD be played. John's ship must have been indestructible as he scraped by the enemy missiles.

With 30,000 points put away and an extra life to play with, John seems to be on his way to the top. But alas every good thing must come to an end, and John's does in glory, with 37,150 points to his name and the fact that he has beaten Mike Dunn in Round One. The scores so far are:

JOHN: 37,150
MIKE: 24,625

ROUND TWO

After they'd stopped for a rest and a swig of Lilt, I finally got the two players back to their beeping computers to commence the second bout of joystick-ripping rage! John doesn't seem to be playing as well as before (perhaps Skippy's put something in his Lilt – who knows?), losing his first life at only 6,500 points to Skippy's 5,100.

But to make up for the lost life John is putting everything he has into his game. He's got to Level Two in hardly any time at all, notching up 10,425 points. By now Skippy has sussed that he's going to lose, so he's just taken his pinkies off the keyboard and his game has ended with only a mere 8,775 points!

But wait – Skippy's untimely demise has distracted John and while he laughed at the juvenile score on Skippy's high-score table he lost two, yes TWO lives (pride comes before a fall, *Lloyd's Grandma writes*).

John is clearly upset by the massive loss of life but he's trooping on in style. The game on his screen is going on and on into new dimensions and unknown levels. He's entered Level Three with 23,400! but it hasn't lasted long, yes, John Kitts has finally given in with a puny score of 23,575.

As in the previous Challenge, there's no need for a third round; the second-round scores ensure John's victory:

JOHN: 23,575
MIKE: 8,775

Well, the contestants have left the ring and the crowds has begun to disperse and go home from tonight's fantastic event. John 'The Mangler' Kitts was the overall winner and Mike 'Gawd he's good!!' Dunn lost. The hapless CRASH reviewer will have to practice hard next time to save our honour... And that brings us to the end of this CRASH Challenge special, so thank you for tuning in, I'm Nick Roberts, and look out for the next Challenge in Issue 48, the Christmas Special from channel CRASH.

GET SMASHED IN THE



There may have been a few exceptional occasions on which CRASH reviewers were thoroughly trounced by high-scoring Challengers, but then everyone has bad days. This time we're taking no chances. All the reviewers – Robin Candy, Mike Dunn, Richard Eddy, Nick Roberts, Mark Rothwell, Ben Stone and Paul Sumner – have been sent to special Joystick Optimum Kinetics Education training camps where they're already practising for Challenges far into the future.

What we want from *you* is, well, someone foolhardy enough to challenge CRASH. Once again there's a wide choice of games: **anything Smashed in 1987**. ('1987' is defined in the CRASH Challenge Act as Issues 37-46 inclusive.)

Just choose your game and tell us your high score; then the Challenge Minion takes over, picking a Challenger and a reviewer by processes which are far too complicated to go into here.

But be warned, Challengers: the days of hapless reviewers are over. (They've all been issued with haps.)

Dear CRASH Challenge Minion

I just won't listen to reason, and with reckless disregard for my own safety I am challenging CRASH. Yes, I reckon I can beat any of your reviewers, hap for hap, in this game (a 1987 Smash):

The reason I'm so confident is that I've already scored:

So put *that* in your edge connector and smoke it.

NAME
ADDRESS
.....
POSTCODE
TELEPHONE NUMBER
AGE

Enter now while confidence lasts – rush this form to: CRASH Challenge, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

If you're selected for the Challenge we'll pay your fare to Ludlow and back home, feed you while you're here, and quite possibly pull the plug out on your Spectrum while you're playing.

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WINNERS & PRIZES



SLEAZY SUMMERWEAR

Piranha's penchant for all things fishy showed itself in this comp, where **Darren Hanson** of Oxford, OX5 1BN won a copy of *The Big Sleaze*, £5 Canon cinema voucher and membership of the Piranha Fin Club – by designing a watery wardrobe for the eponymous piranhas.

Four other winners are each receiving a copy of *The Big Sleaze* and a £5 Canon cinema voucher. They are:

Paul Wakeling, Leicestershire, LE6 0DE; Christopher Pearcey, West Yorkshire, HD3 4AU; Edward Burton, Beds, MK45 4HT; Jeff Fuge, Bristol, BS5 8SN.

And 35 runners-up receive a copy of the adventure each:

Tony Marshall, N.Humberside, HU15 2UA; Umran Salim AKhtar, Surrey, CR4 3PB; Philip Corbett, Warks, CV8 1DJ; Justin Rose, S.Wales, CF3 8AE; Stephen Ward, Co.Clare, Eire; Catherine Patrick, Berks, RG4 7HS; David Binns, Cornwall, TR10 9HB; Leslie Cutting, Isle Of Wight, PO33 4LR; Mark Mayfield, Bucks, HP8 4JB; Mark Sibson, W.Yorks, WF5 0PF; Peter Carroll, Tyne & Wear, NE40 4XF; Daniel Watkins, Worcestershire, DY12 1JS; Peter Robinson, Kent, CT9 4NA; Anthony Johnson, London, NW2 5TA; Stephen Alder, Glos, GL5 4PT; Alan Walton, Lancs, BB2 3RW; Paul Howard, Middx, EN1 3NS; Nicola McNeill, Liverpool, L12 9EP; Mark Peters, Essex, SS5 6BJ; Brett Nainggolan, Surrey, RH6 9LE; Paul Tuersket, Wiltshire, SN15 5AJ; John Alexander, Cheshire, CW8 1LZ; Michael Burns, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 8UJ; Chris Stewart, Merseyside, L36 4NU; Glenn Taylor, Gwynedd, N.Wales; Paul McCullough, Co.Down, Ireland, BT34 1EE; James Shepherd, Essex, CO6 1BJ; West Midlands, DY5 2QQ; Simon P Broder, Sunderland, SR5 5BL; Anthony Homefray, Wilts, SP1 1SQ; Graham Leech, Cumbria, CA2 7LZ; Mr D A Schofield, Staffordshire, B77 2NS; A.M.R Fernando, London, SW16 2XL; Paul Grimshare, S.Wales, CF4 6JX; Nikki Harber, Kent, BR5 3DX.



THE VERY LOVELY ATHENA

Ye goddesses! The eponymous delectable deity only had to wave an Ocean sports bag stuffed with goodies and the entries came down like thunderbolts. (What goodies? – Goodies Ed Oh, 12 Ocean/Imagine games, including *Athena*, two T-shirts, a mug and a bundle of posters. – Comps Minion)

Five winners get those bags in full:

Mark Blackhurst, Notts, NG4 2QR; Mr S I Romain, Wilts, SN15 2PH; Karl Anderson, Devon, PL20 7AH; Simon Bramhall, Lancs, FY5 1RL; Ryan Banwell, Suffolk, IP27 0JW.

And 25 runners-up each receive a copy of *Athena* (the game, not the goddess):

Warren Moss, Surrey, SM5 1PG; J R Martin, Middx, UB10 8LS; Ray Casson, Cumbria, CA28 8SQ; Jason Williams, Birmingham, B28 0RD; Mark Fear, Berkshire, SL6 7DP; Ian Sivertson, Liverpool 4, L4 3SF; Michael Stevens, Liverpool, L18 7JS; Lee Reveley, West Midlands, CV3 6HT; Andrew Read, Suffolk, IP6 9JX; Paul Howard, Middx, EN1 3NS; Matthew Callard, West Yorkshire, LS28 7NP; P C Stubbs, Staffordshire, ST13 5BB; Lee John Smith, Herts, AL10 0JF; Matthew Johnson, Warwickshire, CV31 1UQ; Tom Baldwin, Derbyshire, DE5 2TQ; Gary Clark, Central Region, FK2 9JG; R J Spencer, Essex, S57 5JH; Jon Sendel, Sheffield, S8 8DU; Robert Benson, Derby, DE2 2BR; James Hoare, Birmingham, B30 1DL; Daniel Watkins, Worcestershire, DY12 1JS; Mathew Hassall, Cheshire, CH3 5RX; N A Hill, Liverpool, L19 1RG; Scott Fletcher, Sheffield, S3 8AT; Dave Cannon, Gloucester, GL51 6LY.

MY ARCADE RETTE



CRASH and ZZAP! alike were flooded with cutout arcadeerettes answering this two-mag challenge: to design an arcade console for *Bubble Bobble*, recently Smashed in its Speccy conversion by Firebird.

The big winner was **Matt Lyon** of Hampshire RG22 5RH, who wins... a *Bubble Bobble* machine, of course. These 25 runners-up receive a copy of the game each:

William White, Hants, GU12 4SU; Emma Sharp, Lancs, PR2 4NS; Paul Tuersley, Wiltshire, SN15 5AJ; David Bardwell, Herts, SG9 0NU; David Holme, Merseyside, L45 8H; Alex Madigan, West Midlands, DY8 4BU; Chris Scott, Shropshire, TF9 4BU; Deniz Ahmet, London, SE15 4NP; Mark Bell, West Midlands, B75 6SP; Richard Mullins, Wales, D70 8JG; Paul Turland, Birmingham, B38 8SX; Paul Kirk, Norwich, NR10 5JE; Scott Hemsley, Scotland, KY1 2RL; David Crozier, Tyne & Wear, DH5 9QY; Stephen Ward, Co.Clare, Eire; Steven Martin, West Midlands, DY5 2QQ; Ben Everett, Leicester, LE3 1AT; Paul Galbraith, Tyne & Wear, SR3 4AJ; Xann, Ireland, BT65 4AB; Graham Randall, Kent, BR2 7DQ; Kevin Payne, Avon, BS18 2RZ; Marcus Winch, Reading, RG5 3DU; Mark Watkins, Bucks, HP7 9BB; Adam Cheyne, Aberdeen, AB2 5NA; Stephen Bell, Manchester, M26 0RZ.

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The CRASH Classifieds continue to pour in – if your ad isn't featured this month, don't despair! We'll do our best to get it in ASAP on (as they say in classifieds), and if the worst comes to the worst (which it usually does these days) you can always send the ad in again. Don't forget to fill out the whole form, give unflinching obedience to the small print below, and **USE BLOCK CAPITALS!**

- 1 Individuals and small organisations such as fanzines and homegrown-software publishers are welcome to use the CRASH classifieds, but professional businesses cannot. Paid-for classifieds for businesses will probably be introduced soon.
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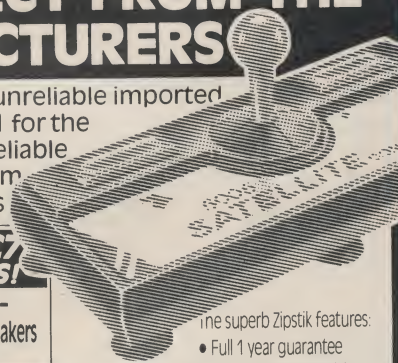
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FANZINE

FILE



THE RANGE of fanzines is striking: we're receiving new titles almost every week now, as well as longer-established, better-known zines. *The Bug* celebrated its third birthday and 31st issue with a much-touted redesign, but in fact it's still the same plain look, enhanced by clearer reproduction on white paper (which will always be better than dark colours for nonprofessional printing). The screen shots are still very dark.

Perhaps the best thing in the latest *Bug* is its profile and analysis of Piranha; but the reviews are still rather insipid, relying too much on the old black-and-white good game/bad game distinction, and the two moving spirits, Jaron Lewis and Jeffrey Davy, have their pictures in three times in the one issue. Even CRASH isn't *that* self-indulgent!

Still, it's worth keeping an eye on *The Bug*, if only for the pleasurable irritation its increasingly contrived political content can cause.

THE BUG'S CATCHING

Plus, which was launched in June 1986 after Editor Raymond Mortimer had thought about it for two years, shows *Buggish* influence in its throw-together layout and A5 format (A5 pages are half the size of CRASH pages). It's more of a straightforward computer mag, though, packing reviews, adventures, programming tips and all sorts of jottings into every available corner. (But leaving almost two pages blank, apparently for nonexistent 'late news', is a bit of a cheat!)

Unlike *The Bug*, *Plus* is Spectrum-specific; like *The Bug*, it claims a 'new

Computers, symbols of the paperless world, have more magazines covering them than almost any other hobby. Besides the commercial titles which count their circulations in tens of thousands, there's a host of homegrown fanzines which count their success in 10p pieces.

Old, new, borrowed, green-and-yellow like the old *Bug* – BARNABY PAGE investigates the Spectrum's underground press.

look'.

At the other end of the spectrum – the disk drive end – is *Entertainment Micro User*, or *EMU*, which covers the Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore 64 as well as running fiction and film and video reviews (like all good computer magazines). We haven't received copies of this for several months, but it's worth mentioning: almost a minimagazine rather than a fanzine, *EMU* is professionally typeset and printed, funded by Publisher Jalal Miah and edited by Paul Rand.

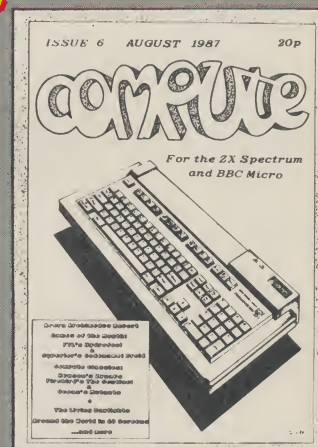
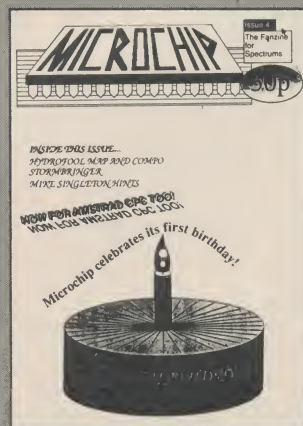
Besides fun/useless BASIC routines and a parody of the games-playing challenge, the first-birthday issue of April 1987 (it can take a long time to get to the top of the Fanzine File!), features 20 reviews of inconsistent quality, some of them going into great detail. Screen shots are indistinct, but there's some striking original artwork.



APPLE AND CHIPS

Another finely-produced magazine is *Microchip* from Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, a year old with just four issues under its editorial belt. *Microchip* is produced at the editors' school on an Apple Macintosh Plus: written on *WriteNow*, designed on *PageMaker*, and output on a LaserWriter at 300-dot-per-inch resolution with graphics from *SuperPaint* – all a far cry from the supposedly humble Spectrum to which the mag's devoted.

It looks beautiful, but perhaps *PageMaker* isn't used enough; *Microchip* looks more like a book than a magazine, with every page repeating the same format of three justified columns (columns where both the left and right margins are straight vertical lines, like CRASH review columns). The



graphics are effective, but again it seems the Mac software isn't used to its full potential. Editorially, there are good adventure and tips sections, the latter tellingly entitled Software Solutions with an excellent Mac-made map. At 14 pages it's thin, but there's great potential in *Microchip*.

IF REM + RAM ≤ SUM THEN GOTO SUM

Visually far less flashy, *REM* (which has merged with *RAM* just for the latest issue, their tenth and third respectively) is one of the best-written Spectrum fanzines around, despite an occasional overdose of wisecracking and a weak RPG section. (I think that's properly part of *REM*; the distinction isn't clear). The review percentage system is identical to the CRASH system before its recent overhaul; indeed, that CRASH influence is evident in many fanzines.

In this merged issue, *REM*, *RAM*, *ROM* or whatever it is also deals with the *Barbarian Maria* Whittaker ad controversy and the sexism-in-software issue far more level-headedly than *The Bug* makes its ideological points.

And it does the same when fielding criticisms of KJC Games's PBM game *It's A Crime!* – the violence-in-PBM issue is just part of a very long and detailed examination of a popular game.

Larger type and/or better photocopying would make the A5 *REM/RAM* a winner; the editors, Gary Doyle and Jonathan Welch respectively, have wisely avoided screen shots and screen dumps. After all, there's no point having them without excellent duplication.

The fanzines continue their separate ways after the merged issue.

From two three-letter titles to another... **SUM**, or **Spectrum User Magazine**, is produced at King Edward VI Five Ways School in Birmingham and competently run by Editor Mark Newman. He's managed to obtain sponsorship from Evesham Micros, the independent radio station BRMB and the central Birmingham branch of WHSmith, and he's sent us two successive issues, which helps flesh out the Fanzine File! (And, editors, it helps us form a real opinion...)

The fourth **SUM** is out now. It's a low-key A5 affair, aimed at the Birmingham area (and largely at Mark Newman's school), with a few cleanly-reproduced screen dumps but not much detail to the writing. Too many fanzines rely too closely on inlay-type descriptions of games without really reviewing them — though mind you some 'real' magazines could be accused of that too...

IN PRAISE OF LONGER TITLES

After **SUM** and **REM/RAM** you can probably expect **FOR** and **LET** and **VAL**; indeed, **SUM** even promises **ZUM** for Z88 owners! But there are times when we need long names like *International Herald Tribune*, so let's move on to **Compute** (it'll do), an A4 title for the Spectrum and BBC Micro.

Fanzine File has the sixth issue, dated August 1987; **Compute** appears every other month, so it's well past its first anniversary now.

This ish is highlighted by a good report on Acorn's new Archimedes range, and apparently **Compute** usually carries POKES and general features; but Issue 6 is otherwise devoted to the pretty thorough reviews. The percentages are a bit extreme, though — they're mostly in the 80s and 90s apart from a single 24% (That was for a BBC game, so who cares...)

Unfortunately **Compute** is almost illegible. It's all in a condensed (ie squashed-up as opposed to normal or expanded) typeface from Clares's *Fontwise+* and there's virtually no space between letters. The lower-case i, for instance, is lost when it's next to l, m, n or any other letter beginning with a vertical stroke. Also, the headlines aren't nearly big enough to show where an article is starting.

Compute is worth reading, if you can.

HOT AYR

The Spectrum-specific **Reflex**, which sent a seventh issue dated September 1987, is produced in the same Scottish town as Sir Clive Sinclair's Z88 desktop computers: Irvine, in Ayrshire. So it's got a well-written, well-researched news piece on the Z88, and the reviews are decent too, if rather rambling. Two-page (A4) adventure and tips sections complete the traditional fanzine content.

The resolution of **Reflex**'s printer is very poor, and it would be better typed (not to mention stapled...); but it's a worthwhile, fairly well-established monthly (once a fanzine's passed the hurdle of the first few months it's likely to go on publishing — that's how the editors are separated from the boys) with some local advertising. Could some more Scottish fanzines cross the border to Ludlow?



AS FEATURED IN CRASH

From Bristol comes another A4, **Spectacular**, which sent in its 11th issue at the beginning of August! (It was featured in **CRASH** as long ago as Issue 38.) Just crying out for an 'It is — are you?' *Independent-style* ad campaign, **Spectacular** has some imaginative touches — Issue 11, for instance, features its own fanzine (and magazine) file entitled *Rivals*. The fanzines do seem to live in the shadow of the commercial magazines, reporting on our reports and cutting out our pictures, so it's good to see a fanzine taking note of its own kind as well.

There's also the standard adventure/tips/news material, substantial listings — and a **Spectacular** Publicity Pack that's better-written than the fanzine itself!

Spectacular, Spectrum-specific (tongue-twister...), is produced on an Amstrad CPC464 using *Tasword* and printed, with screen dumps coming through a Multiface 128, on an Alphacom 32. Editors J Davies and N Pryce hope to acquire an Atari ST and Mirrorsoft's *Fleet Street Editor* for supersemiprofessionalism, but 'until then', they say, 'we'll stick with 8-bit technology'. It's a plain and straightforward look — and I won't comment on Issue 11's photocopying, because the editors insist it's a one-off aberration.

HERE IS THE GNUS

Finally, two new fanzines with similar titles. **The Spectrum Keyboard Basher**, of which only the first (June/July) issue has arrived from Ipswich (are there others?) is devoted to reviews, descriptive but sometimes too jokey. The 50p cover price may put some off, though it shouldn't be too much for a fanzine, and the collage-style typography of the headlines is eye-strainingly unreadable! Still, there are some striking computer-produced graphics and a sense of humour that could be effective if tightly controlled.

Finally finally, **Joystick Required** is a tiny (ten-page A5) rival to **THE GAMES MACHINE**, produced by Ian Hoser and Alex somebody in Guildford, Surrey. It covers the Spectrum and Atari ST, an odd combination no doubt explained by pocket-money economics. Again, the humour gets in the way of the real subject — but it's free (so far)! Just send an SAE every month.

HI, MOM, IF YOU'RE WATCHING

Thanks to all the editors and publishers who dropped in to the **CRASH** stand at The PCW Show, and thanks of course to everyone who sends in zines. They'll all get in **Fanzine File** eventually; just let us know that you haven't ceased publication, or that you have.

The next **Fanzine File** will be one with a difference: in Issue 48, **CRASH** presents its very own fanzine, produced by Mike Dunn and Robin Candy without benefit of Apricots, CRTronic typesetters, process cameras or Oli Frey. With it they'll write a kind of DIY guide for new fanzine editors, drawing from their harrowing experiences in zine-production — so they'd be interested to hear from any fanzine editors with practical advice on how to/not to go about it. Write a letter.

The Bug: Bug Subs, 28 Leaside Avenue, Muswell Hill, London N10 3BU. 45p cover price, subscriptions 50p per issue for five or more issues.

Entertainment Micro User: Donnini House, Comet Hill, Peterlee, Easington, Durgam SR8 3ER. It was 45p in April...

Joystick Required: Ian Hoser, 41 Abbotswood, Guildford, Surrey GU1 1UZ. Free — just send an SAE — but donations welcomed!

Microchip: 37 Park Place, Cheltenham,

Gloucestershire GL50 2RE. 30p.
Plus: 29 Frimley Green Road, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey GU16 5AL. 30p.

RAM: Jonathan Welch, Principal's House, Kerrison School, Thorndon, near Eye, Suffolk IP23 7JG. 35p for joint issue with **REM**.

Reflex: Spectre Publications, 21 Berry Drive, Irvine, Ayrshire KA12 0LJ. Single copies 30p, six issues for £3.50, 12 issues for £6.00.

REM: Gary Doyle, The Little Manor, Thorndon, near Eye, Suffolk IP23 7JL. 35p for joint issue with **RAM**.

Spectacular: 28 Claremont Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8DH. Single copies 50p and an SAE, six issues for £4.00.

The Spectrum Keyboard Basher: 'Langdale', 35 Bucklesham Road, Kirtton, Ipswich IP10 0PD. Single copies 50p and an SAE, six issues for £4.00.

Spectrum User Magazine: King Edward Five Ways School, Scotland Lane, Birmingham B32 4BT. No cover price.

Compute: it's 20p, but came without an address. Could the editors please...?

EAST MEETS WEST

Finally recovered from the shock of seeing the Art of Noise's new album get a mere two stars in a certain music magazine and the additional shock of a new On The Screen logo, MIKE 'not really very skippy and far from being in the least bit mouse-like but still unbelievably cool' DUNN gets down to the hip 'n' trendy beat of this month's On The Screen, the section about everything except Spectrum screen dumps . . .

HOTEI

Well, at least Alistair Garratt's picture of *Hotel*, a philosopher and a pagoda allowed me to prove that my intelligence is vastly superior to that of our Managing Ed. Everyone knows this cool character *Hotel* is the Japanese god of wealth, and if Nintendo sales are anything to go by he's a very busy chap. Alistair hails from Finchfield in the West Midlands.



COUNTRYSIDE VIEW

'Isn't that nice!' says Nick Roberts, the man of *Playing Tips* fame, as he looks at *Countryside View*. 'A lot better than all those horrible Judge Dredds and all those other nasty violent screens,' he adds grumpily.

Nice Idyllic Countryside Pictures Which Bring Solace Into The Harsh And Violent Life Of A Poor Overworked And Underpaid Reviewer (who could he mean? - Concerned Reader) are brought to you by Alan McNamara of Oldham, Lancashire. Note the excellent use of colour.



Wow! It's getting dark early now, isn't it? I mean, it's 11.30 and the street lights are on in Ludlow's main (and only) street. I've just finished another On The Screen all on my own, though next month Paul Sumner will be collaborating. I wonder if I might be allowed to go home now?

YOU can't, of course - first you have to send your screens to On The Screen, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. If you can fit all that on your Jiffy bag, then congrats to you. If you can fit in an SAE too,

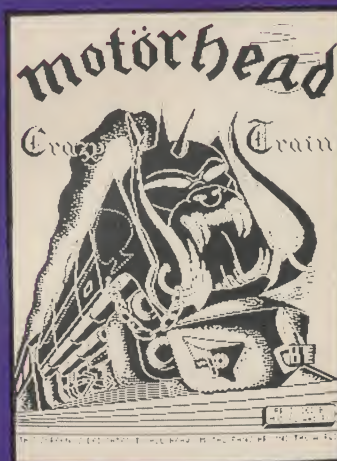
JAPS

Just to spite Nick, here's a birrov 'ard fightin', also from Alan McNamara of Oldham. Just goes to show you can't trust anyone . . . the image takes me back to the days when I read *Eagle* and *Commando*.



MOTÖRHEAD

This one comes all the way from Tomar in Portugal, from a couple of guys called Miguel Traquina and Rui Antunes. I'm not too keen on heavy metal . . . but I'll admit the monochromatic screen is very neat, with great finesse and attention to detail. It'd be a perfectly good album cover! The Motörhead picture is actually made up of two separate screens, and the effect works surprisingly well.



you'll get your tape back.

Remember: if your entry is printed you get a full-colour framed and mounted screen dump courtesy of Rainbird, the bird behind *The Advanced OCP Art Studio*.

If you've already had your screen printed and you haven't had it Rainbirdised, don't despair. Thousands share your problem, and Rainbird's Clare Edgeley is on the case.

Till nex' mumf: chill out!

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GO ON THE

RAMPAGE

WITH

ACTIVISION
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Crash
Competition

MONSTER MANIA is about to come to your Spectrum when Activision goes ape over *Rampage* – its latest arcade conversion. *Rampage* is the corky coin-op featuring a large gorilla (who bears a striking resemblance to King Kong) and a horde of marauding monsters bashing their way through cities, knocking down skyscrapers and killing off billions of soldiers.

Rampage is set for release near Christmas, and there's a preview of it in this month's CRASH, but if you want to be one of the first to play it then answer the questions below and you could win the **first prize**: a complete, and very hairy, gorilla suit to scare granny with.

Second prize is a gorilla head, hands and feet to scare grandad with; **third prize** is a gorilla head and hands to scare mummy with; **fourth prize** is a gorilla head to scare little sis with; and **fifth prize** is a rubber gorilla mask to scare the hamster with. And, of course, all the winners get a Spectrum copy of *Rampage* and an endless fold-out poster thrown in as well!

1 Which company produces the arcade game Rampage?

- a) Bally/Midway
- b) Sega
- c) Nintendo

2 Who played the girl who fell in love with King Kong in the 1933 film?

- a) Zsa Zsa Gabor
- b) Fay Wray
- c) Danny La Rue

3 Besides the gorilla, what are the other two monsters in Rampage?

- a) Godzilla and a wolfman
- b) An ogre and Godzilla
- c) A huge goblin and a wolfman

4 When captured in the 1933 film King Kong, was Kong taken to ...

- a) a zoo?
- b) a circus?
- c) a theatre?

5 How many players maximum can play the coin-op version of Rampage?

- a) two
- b) three
- c) four

25 runners-up will each receive copies of the game and the poster. So, your starter for ten is ...

When you think you've got all the answers right send them in on the back of a banana, er, postcard or sealed envelope along with your name and address to: **RAMPANT RAMPAGING MONSTERS COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than November 25. The winners will be drawn from the correct entries randomly and the decision of CRASH's judges in all respects is final, unless they are picked up and thrown against the wall by a gargantuan monkey.

**APE ABOUT IN
MONKEY
GEAR AND THEN
BIFF DOWN THE
BUILDINGS!!**

**WIN
A GORILLA
SUIT AND
COPIES OF
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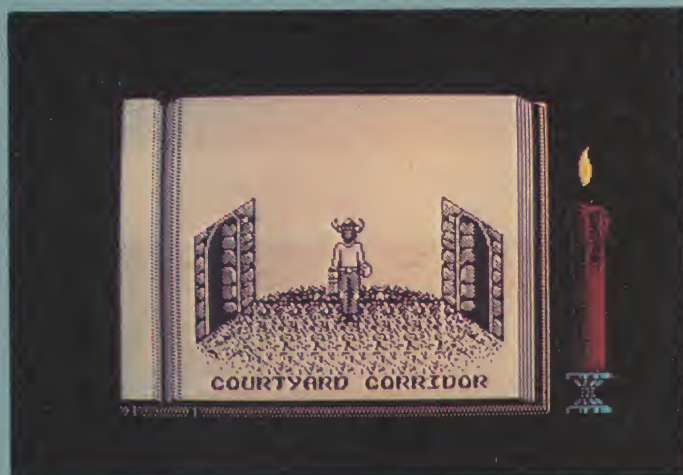
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PREVIEW

MERELY MANGRAM —

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► Decisions in the courtyard corridor of Activision's *Knightmare*

THEY SAY it can be like a bad electric dream working for Activision, and perhaps that's why Activision is launching a *Knightmare* game licensed from the eponymous TV show. *Knightmare*, the show produced by Anglia TV, is on the ITV network every Monday and is the first fantasy adventure game to hit the screens. It's about a young adventurer making his way through a strange world full of riddles and puzzles — and with luck they'll all be successfully translated to the Spectrum.

On the computer screen, *Knightmare* will be presented as a book with pages flicking as the player moves from location to location. Hoping to make big sales at Christmas, Activision is releasing *Knightmare* in November at the fantasy price of £9.99.

The screen connection continues with Domark set to reveal its first coin-op conversion — *Star Wars*, which has been floating around the arcades for four years and finally makes it to your small screens in November.

All three sections are included: the battle with the Empire Fighters to the Deathstar, the flight down the tunnels and the overland battle with the towers. There should also be some speech in *Star Wars*, and Domark is promising computer versions of *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return Of The Jedi* in 1988.

There was plenty of snaffling at The PCW Show, (snaff-ling, v., to snatch product or programmers from other companies). Not five minutes after Firebird had snaffled some of Hewson's programmers — along with the *Uridium* follow-up *Morpheus* — Elite went and snaffled both Durell's new games: *Chain Reaction* and *Spitfire*. Elite doesn't know when or how it's

going to release them but there are some screen shots here.

Chain Reaction is set in a nuclear power station where anti-nuclear activists have reprogrammed the station's robots to empty the containment vault and attack all human staff! Now there are 18 canisters of dangerous fuel rods scattered through the seven-storey station. You have 30 minutes to save the world...

Spitfire is similar to Durell's *Thanatos*, the dragon game of last Christmas, with large well-animated plane graphics shooting up other planes and the landscape. More details when we get them.

Jackal is Konami's new conversion from its own arcade machine. It's a kind of *Ikari Warriors* in tanks, where either one or two players trundle over different types of terrain rescuing prisoners. It should be out by Christmas.

On to *Gremlin Graphics*, which has a mountain of releases piling up for the next few months. The first four to appear should be *MASK II*, *Compendium*, *Deflektor* and *Tour De Force*.

MASK II, coming hot on the tyres of *MASK I* (which got 81% Overall last issue), features four separate adventures within the one game. The action is divided into two main challenges. First, you select the right team of three agents to continue the missions, each with his own specialised vehicle; then come the four missions, covering oodles of locations.

On a less serious note, Gremlin also has *Compendium*, starring the Wink family headed up by Tiddy, the father. It's a selection of classic board games with novel twists — 'snakes and hazzards', with animated snakes, ludo, bingo (though I can't see anything funny



► Thermonuclear pranks in Elite's *Chain Reaction*

► Domark's *Star Wars* — a real star strike for your Spectrum



▼ Tank you very much: Konami's *Jackal*



▼ Trucking along in *MASK II* from Gremlin Graphics





► The fatty Agent X hovers above a moon station in Mastertronic's *Agent X II*

about those two) and an old pub game, catch-the-flying-beer-glass.

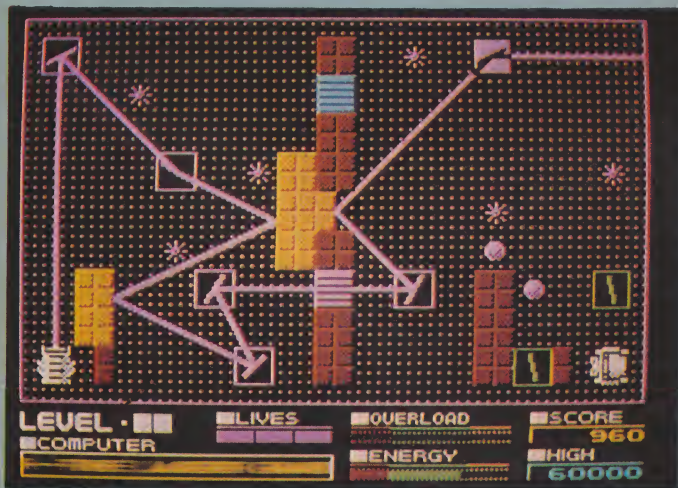
But if you want to use a bit of the old grey matter there's always *Deflektor*, where the idea is to deflect beams of light by mirrors and send it through lenses to reach the home receiver . . . really it's a bit difficult to explain without playing the game, and because I haven't I can't.

Amid all the racing games like *Supersprint*, *Grand Prix Simulator* and *ATV Simulator*, Gremlin has decided to go with the more sedate sport of cycling in *Tour De*

Force. The race takes you through five countries each with a different backdrop and terrain to watch – the objective is to win each leg (after all, we can't have legless cyclists) of the race and thus continue to the next country.

It's not going to be all plain sailing, though (*well, of course not, you're on cycles - Ed Dir*) – in case you don't get kicked off by the other racers there are potholes, broken bottles and bales of hay littering the course. Oh, and my heartfelt apologies for calling it *Tour De Farce* a month or two back . . .

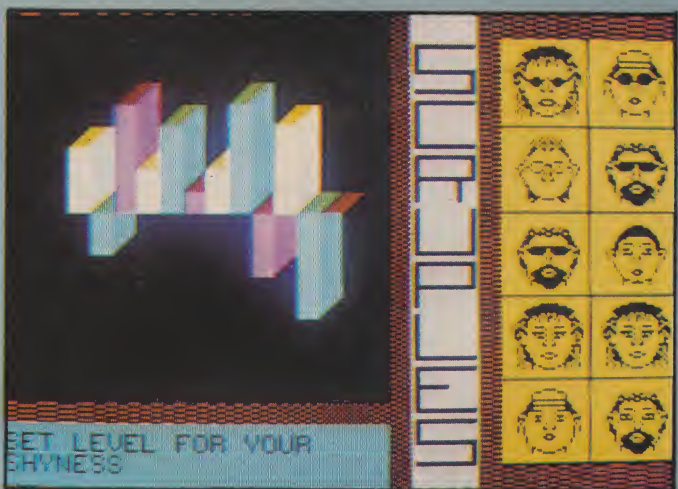
► Making light work: *Deflektor* from Gremlin Graphics



► Your lips are like petals – bicycle pedals: *Tour De Force* from Gremlin Graphics



► It's the revenge of the mutant planning officers in Hewson's *Nebulus*



► Yes, it's *Scruples* from Virgin Games. No, it's not. It depends.

Hewson's *Impossaball* programmer John Phillips is back with a novel little offering called *Nebulus*. The eponymous *Nebulus* is a planet where strange towers have been built without planning permission, and your task is to knock 'em down, using the precarious ledges to climb to the tops of the circular towers and there setting off the destruct mechanisms. Hewson says 'it's got 3-rotational scrolling, with precise hidden-surface removal running at 25 frames per second!' Which, roughly translated, means it's jolly good indeed.

Question: you visit another Spectrum magazine and see them reviewing an unfinished game. Do you ring CRASH and tell us? Yes? No? Depends? Well, if you've got scruples you do! And that's exactly what Virgin Games has got: *Scruples*, licensed from the popular board game. *Scruples* shows up your worst, or best, traits, exposing them to all your chums. Review soon? Yes? No . . . ?

From ethics to evil, let's go to news of *Agent X II*, Mastertronic's follow-up to *Agent X*

(Overall 85% in Issue 37). Our eponymous hero goes into orbit to find and defeat the evil Professor who's about to unleash his zit-ray.

The ray, logically enough, makes everyone break out in terminal acne – so they all rush off to spend their entire life's savings on skin cream and within a couple of days bang goes the economy. And even if the economy doesn't collapse the evil professor will suddenly become fabulously wealthy because he's bought up all the zit-cream manufacturers. But this boulder must be stopped and quick!

So Agent X is off, entering the mad Prof's secret stronghold beneath the surface of the moon.

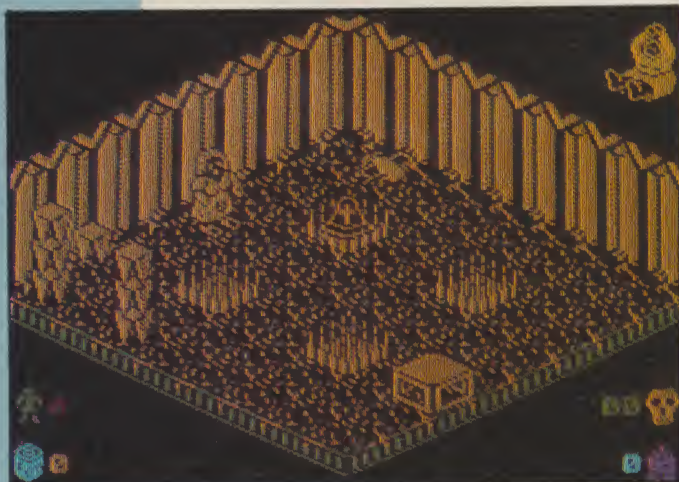
Three more from Mastertronic: *Laserwheel*, a bizarre shoot-'em-up; *Level Five*, another maze-type shoot-'em-up featuring squirming amoebas; and *Rentakill Rita* – an isometric arcade adventure starring the pottiest cleaner who deals with vermin by jumping on them.

From what I've seen of the preview version, *Rentakill Rita* looks very promising, as does the prospect of having it finished just in time for next issue. And so am I – finished till next issue, that is.

► Level One of Level Five! What's this from Mastertronic?!



► Things that go psssssssst! in the night: Mastertronic's *Rentakill Rita*

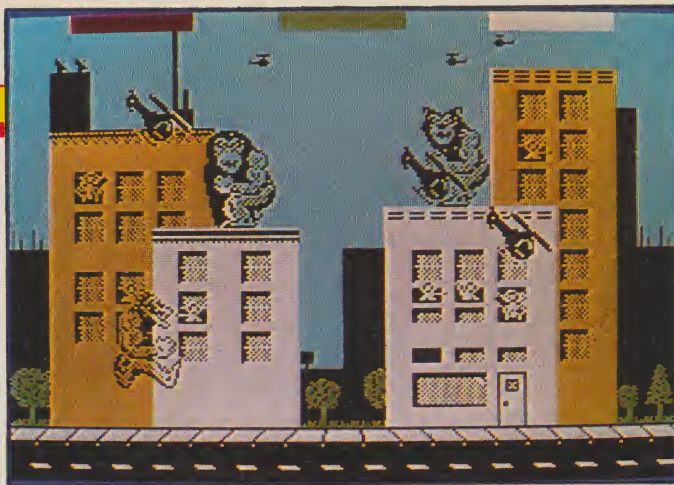
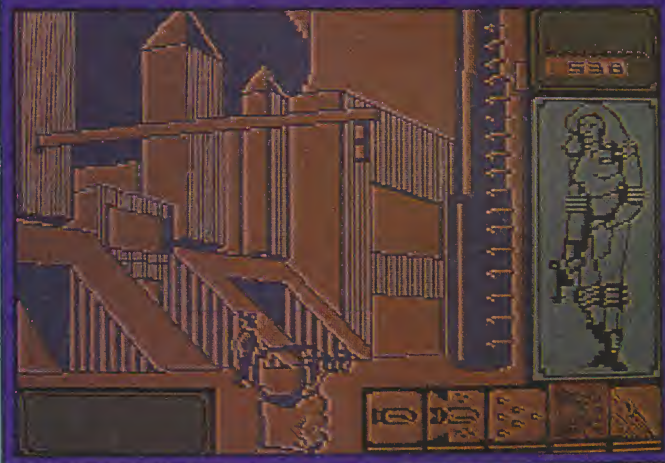


Coming ssssssooon: here's a taste of Piranha's *Judge Death*, a shoot-'em-up adventure which will make a splash in CRASH.

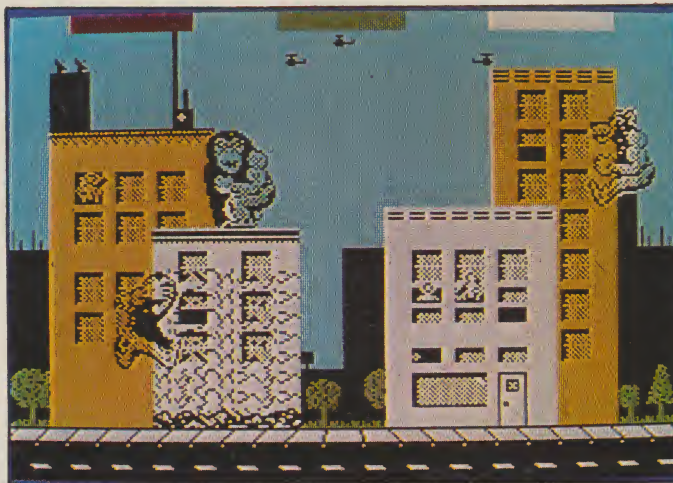
The eponymous judge comes from 2000 AD comic, and the game's release coincides with Titan Books publishing the stories of the three 2000 AD judges in book form.

So it all ties in with a special 16-page 2000 AD comic supplement in CRASH Issue 48, cosponsored by CRASH, Piranha and Titan Books. It's accompanied by features covering Titan's place in the comics universe, other 2000 AD licences and so on. There'll also be a full review of the game.

Piranha's *Judge Death* will be released on the Spectrum in mid-November at £9.95.



► See no evil?: *Rampage*



► Walls come a-tumblin' down in Activision's *Rampage*

MONSTERS COME OUT OF THE CLOSET

Rampage

Activision £9.99

November

Picture this . . . There are these three monsters, probably related to King Kong, Godzilla and the rest of the screen ensemble, having a real beano, stomping from city to city gratuitously knocking down skyscrapers and killing soldiers. The game is *Rampage*, Bally/Midway's coin-op soon to be released on the Spectrum by Activision.

(If you read your CRASH from front to back you will have seen the *Rampage* comp on page 154, and maybe even the cover.)

But they're no ordinary monsters, of course – Activision never deals with ordinary monsters. No, these are special monsters, or rather people who were turned into monsters: there's George the gorilla, Lizzie the Godzilla-type creature and Ralph the 30-foot-high wolfman.

Tracking them down is a bunch of mean soldiers – but that's no problem as the monsters can swash or eat them (depending on how succulent they look, I suppose).

Activision hopes that all the features of the coin-op will be in the Spectrum version, though the programmers may have some trouble squeezing in all 128 levels. As I write they're up to 16 backdrops and 32 foregrounds.

But even on the Spectrum there's room for three players – one on keys, one on cursors and one on a Kempston joystick.

Any objectives in the game? No, it's just sheer physical, meaningless violence. And that's what the CRASH reviewers like to hear . . .

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE?

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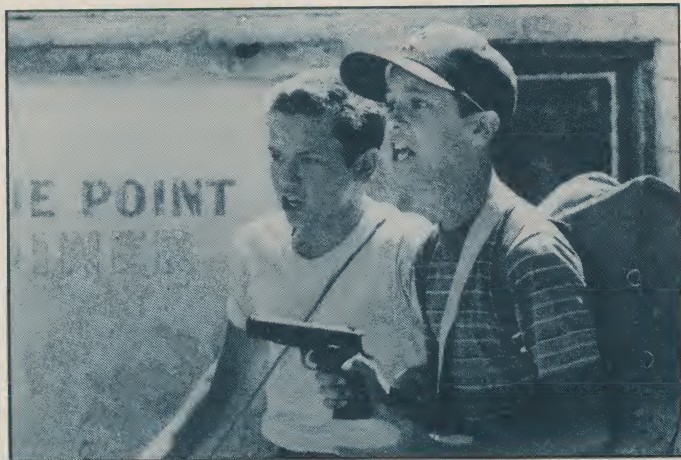
The name of the game

IMAGINE SOFTWARE, 6 CENTRAL STREET, MANCHESTER, M2 5NS. TELEPHONE 061 834 3939. TELEX 669977



GOGGLE!

COMING SOON TO A SCREEN
NEAR YOU . . .



IF ANYBODY out there hates **Eddie Murphy** they'd better book a place on the next shuttle off the planet. From now till Christmas you just won't be able to ignore the wisecracking young American – on the big screen is the hilarious *Beverly Hills Cop II* with Murphy as Axel Foley, the holidaying Detroit cop, and **CIC Video** is rereleasing the original *Beverly Hills Cop* at £9.99. Also available from CIC at the tennier price is *Star Trek – The Motion Picture*.

Continuing his assault on the British public, on November 6 Murphy drops onto video shelves around the country in *The Golden Child*, also starring Charlotte Lewis (*Pirates*). Watch out for some astounding special effects.

CBS/Fox has some exciting rereleases, from John Huston's classic 1951 romantic adventure *The African Queen* (with Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn) up to present-day comedies such as *The Cannonball Run* and way into the future with *Star Wars*.

Guild Home Video rounds off October with two interesting titles. *Duet For One* stars everyone's favourite, Julie Andrews, as a brilliant virtuoso concert violinist who is suddenly struck down by multiple sclerosis, a disease which impairs coordination and makes it impossible for her to play.

Guild's *Nowhere To Hide* sees tough guy Michael Ironside (*Top Gun*, *Scanners*) star alongside Amy Madigan (*Twice In A Lifetime*) in a fast-moving mystery thriller set in the US Marine Corps.

Films about World War II are continually coming out in dribs and drabs, and Medusa Home Video bases its latest release on one of Sven Hassel's most impressive books, *Wheels Of Terror*. It stars those veterans Oliver Reed and David Carradine.

► *Stand By Me*: now you can sit in front of it

13 may prove to be a lucky number for **RCA/Columbia** in November – that's the day the highly-acclaimed *Best Shot* is released. Gene Hackman (*Superman*, *The French Connection*, *Target*) stars in this true story about the trials and tribulations of a school basketball team taken over by a top college coach. A celebrity *Best Shot* Basketball Challenge arranged by RCA/Columbia raised money for charity in mid-October.

RCA/Columbia also has the hugely successful *Stand By Me*, a rather sentimental tale of growing up in America, on rental. And its £14.99 for-sale release of *Ghostbusters* is matched by the cartoon series *The Real Ghostbusters* – ten volumes, at £9.99 each.

Steven Spielberg (*Close Encounters*, *E.T.*, *Gremlins*, everything) is back on **CIC Video** – as writer of *Amazing Stories*, the latest in compilation videos. The three films are a fantastic mixture of 'wonderment, fantasy, irony and comedy' (or so this 'ere press release says). They're all out on a single tape on November 20.

Also look out for CIC's *Deadly Care*, where Cheryl Ladd (TV's *Charlie's Angels*) stars in the true story of a nurse who can't cope with the pressure of an intensive-care unit and reaches for the drug cabinet.

It's around this time of the year the video industry gets together for a massive nosh-up and the **British Video Awards**. Winners this year include *Aliens* for the best film, *Back To The Future* for the most-rented and best family video (along with someone called Michael J Fox for best actor), and Meryl Streep for her role in *Out Of Africa*. *Mona Lisa* picked up an award for Best British Video.

They're back – the **CRASH** video reviews. And by popular request we'll be trying to review more of the latest films on your hire shop's shelves. Just to make sure they are on the shelves, we went down to our local video shop, Goffs in Ludlow, to hire them!

Now, on with the show . . . and don't forget to tell us what you think. Write to **Dominic Handy**, the videos editor, at **CRASH**.

FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF

CIC Video 15

WHEN Ferris Bueller (Matthew Broderick – *War Games*, *Ladyhawke*) takes a day off from school, he doesn't just stay at home watching MTV or spend a day at the local arcade. No, young Bueller regards skipping school as a full-time occupation.

But when the cutest boy in Chicago falls (supposedly) ill even the local police station wishes him well, he's so widely loved.

► Jolly hooky sticks: Matthew Broderick (right) in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*



On this particular day Ferris decides he really is going to enjoy himself. So after he's dragged his misanthropic best friend Cameron (Alan Ruck) from his (real) sick bed and got his girlfriend Sloane (Mia Sara – *Legend*) off school, they all set off to downtown Chicago in Cameron's father's Ferrari and tour the sights of America's second-largest city.

On Ferris's trail are his jealous sister Jeanie and the menacing Ed Rooney, Dean of Students from the local school. As Ferris Bueller himself says, 'life moves pretty fast; if you don't stop and look around, you could miss it' (a bit like *CRASH* – Man Ed).

Matthew Broderick plays Ferris as the most supersmooth, suave and sophisticated person you could ever hope to meet (or be if your name's Mike D). As in most teen pics the hero's bedroom contains everything any teenager could ever want, even the link to his school's computer (left over from *War Games*, no doubt!). Mia Sara and Alan Ruck make the ideal tag-along team, and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* is one of the quickest-moving and cleverest movies I've seen in ages. You just mustn't miss it.

DOMINIC HANDY 90%

Ferris Bueller has so much character, so much guts, so much audacity he can get away with anything; the way he plays to the camera is amusing, though I guess not original, and the script is well-written. Ferris Bueller's Day Off is brilliant, truly funny, a classic – I'd rate it above everything else except The Adventures Of Buckaroo Banzai Across the Eighth Dimension.

MIKE DUNN 93%

HOUSE II: THE SECOND STORY

Entertainment In Video 15

YOU'D THINK squeaky-clean American yuppies would know better than to inherit old mansions by now, there've been so many films hinting at the evil that lurks in unswept corners.

Jesse McLaughlin doesn't; played by Arye Gross (who starred in *Soul Man* earlier this year) in the tedious and silly *House II*, he falls in love with his family's ancestral New England pile and is soon beset by the usual run of poltergeists, holes in the fabric of time and avengers from beyond the grave.

Jesse, his girlfriend Kate (Lar Park Lincoln, who sounds like a car dealership) and mate Charlie (Jonathan Stark) disinter (decoffin) Jesse's great-great-grandfather Gramps (Royal Dano, who sounds like a biscuit or maybe an up-market bone china).

He was a Wild West outlaw and was buried with the magic skull of immortality which the ghost who killed Jesse's parents was looking for, you see – sad, but it happens all the time.

Gramps is a tiresomely sentimental old zombie who refuses to die again – that's one of the disadvantages of having undead characters, of course, you can't kill 'em off without a lot of lore and gore – and wanders around making cute time-warp comments à la *Back To The Future*.

The skull is stolen by a thing from the mists of time, which you might think is a blessing in disguise – end credits? – but Jesse and Charlie dash off into the mists of time to retrieve it. I wouldn't want to spoil the mists of time for you, so suffice it to say that bits are stolen from *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom* (the temple set) and *Gremlins* (a load of primeval Muppets; *House 2* special-effects man Chris Walas also worked on the Spielberg film).

It's an odd mixture of bad comedy and worse horror schlock. And consider this implausibility: The skull gives its owner immortality. (It also glows in the dark; have magic skulls no subtlety these days?) So why was Gramps buried with it in the first place?

And since the nasties who want the skull are still alive in the 1980s despite having lived hundreds of years ago, they are obviously immortal anyway, so why do they need the skull?

Two good points: John Ratzenberger (Cliffie in *Cheers*) as an existential electrician ('Looks like you got some kind of alternate universe in there') and a witty use of sound, both as effects and as tongue-in-cheek music.

And let's not be too hard on Gramps. He hits the nail on the skull quite early on: 'There's something special about this old house – it doesn't know time or space. I would give it neither.'

BARNABY PAGE 16%

If you're expecting a decent follow-up along the same lines as House you'll be pretty disappointed. House II makes no pretence to being a serious eerie horror film, and taking any of it seriously it will ruin your enjoyment. But it's all just so unbelievable it is curiously humorous.

John Ratzenberger and Jonathan Stark add life and wit to a plot that moves beyond the house much more than the first; the surroundings are dank and dreary but the film is lively and full of action.

DOMINIC HANDY 60%

WAR ZONE

Guild Home Video 15

FRESH from covering a fashion show in Paris, ABS TV reporter Don Stevens (Christopher Walken – *The Deer Hunter*, *At Close Range*) is dispatched to report on the fighting in war-torn Beirut. An early offer of an interview with top PLO leader Yassin finds Stevens the victim of deception: the man claiming to represent the PLO is an impostor.

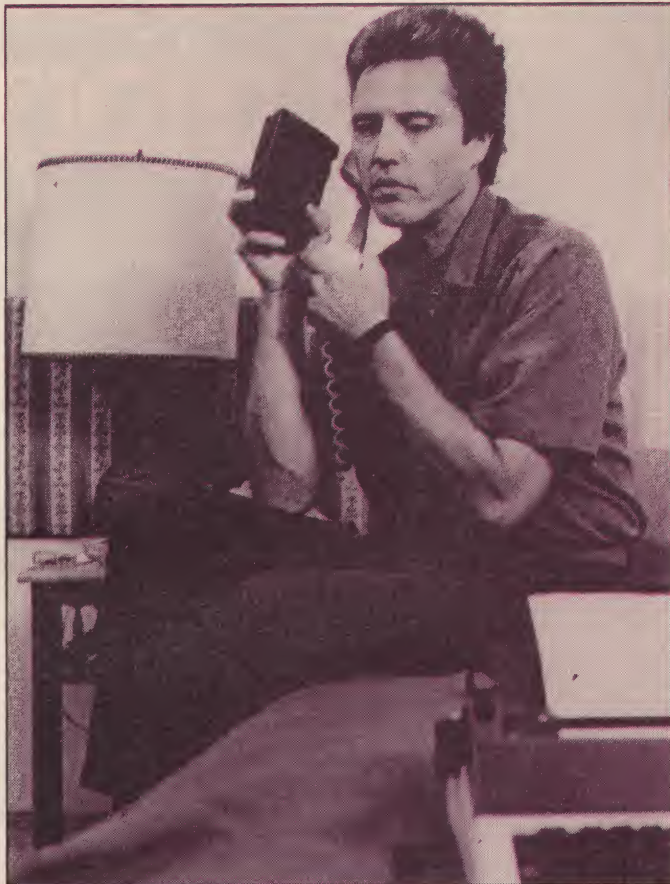
Stevens doesn't take kindly to being made a fool of, and is determined to learn the truth. During his investigations he is manipulated and threatened by all factions, each of them trying to find the REAL Yassin. When Stevens does finally catch up with him, Yassin is ruthlessly gunned down in front of him... by PLO terrorists.

Reporting proves difficult in a world of double agents, bombings and massacres where it doesn't matter who you kill as long as you kill someone. But this reporter is more a participant than an observer; for most of the film he is a pawn in the struggle, betrayed and used by Beirut's many factions.

War Zone is the first Middle East film to go deep behind the headlines and give a real insight into the conflict in Lebanon. It exposes the absurdity of all the killing and captures and is well worth seeing. Walken, as usual, handles his role superbly.

DOMINIC HANDY 82%

War Zone is different. It has no story as such, yet it keeps you watching. Beirut's inhabitants seem unmoved by the carnage that surrounds them daily, and this gives the film an odd atmosphere. The feelings of the Israeli people, on the other



► Writing the news in blood: Christopher Walken in *War Zone*

hand, come across much better than in most war movies. The vast number of warring factions is confusing, but War Zone presents the situation well and gives you a lot to think about.

MIKE DUNN 80%

WITCHBOARD

Guild Home Video 15

IT ALL starts at the house-warming party when bright spark Brandon Sinclair (Stephen Nicholls) decides to use the old ouija board to contact a regular chum on the 'other side' (cue *Twilight Zone* music). He and his ex-girlfriend Linda (Tawny Kitaen – *Bachelor Party*) have a good old fireside chat with the spirit of ten-year-old David.

During the conversation, Linda's husband Jim (Todd Allen) starts shouting abuse at David. Next day Jim's friend gets killed on a building site.

After the party Linda is still strangely attracted to the ouija board and gets it out for more mystical movings. Unfortunately she is befriendng the spirit of someone pretending to be David – a mass murderer who died nearly a century ago. After gaining her trust he uses her to gain entrance into the world of the living.

Linda's health deteriorates, and Jim and Brandon recognise that the spirit Malfetor has made a new home in her. In a desperate attempt to get rid of him, they call in an eccentric young psychic, Zarabeth (Kathleen Wilhoite). Things look bad all round when Zarabeth gets thrown out of her window and impaled on a spike but the two chaps fearlessly set out to destroy the ouija board and the malevolent spirit's way into the world of the living...

And if you believe that all that would happen in the 'real' world you've been watching too many videos! All the characters in *Witchboard* seem to have the worst of luck and the most amazing coincidences: but if you go for this supernatural stuff it'll keep you quiet for a couple of hours or so. I prefer something a bit more down-to-earth.

DOMINIC HANDY 50%

Take a large beakerful of scary juice, dilute to taste with overused tension-building music, add a pinch of the supernatural, slop it about on a ouija board for an hour or so and you've got light entertainment – Witchboard. Worth watching? Well, I quite enjoyed it, but probably for the wrong reasons!

BEN STONE 32%



THE MISSION

Warner Home Video PG

LITTLE did the Guarani Indians of 18th-century South America realise that the death of a single priest would bring among them a man who would inexplicably change their life.

Father Gabriel (Jeremy Irons – *The French Lieutenant's Woman*) is sent from Spain to rebuild the San Carlos mission above the falls after the resident missionary's death, and to re-educate the Indians to the teachings of the Church. He is joined by Rodrigo Mendoza (Robert de Niro – *The Godfather, Part Two* films, *Taxi Driver*, *The Deer Hunter*, *The Untouchables*, etc), a former slave-trader and mercenary who after killing his brother is filled with remorse and must serve his penance in the Jesuit Mission if his soul is ever to rest.

After building strong links with the inhabitants of the forest they find the mission is threatened by changes in the boundary between Spain's and Portugal's colonial land. The missions are now on slave-trading Portuguese territory. A papal delegation led by Cardinal Altamirano (Ray McAnally) must move the missions out of Portuguese territory or threaten the existence of the Jesuit order worldwide. The Indians must be sent back into 'this Garden Of Eden' (as the Cardinal puts it; Father Gabriel admits 'it is a little overgrown') and the members of the Jesuit order must decide whether to stay with the mission – or abandon it, and all their principles. Father Gabriel leaves them to ponder over one last thought; 'If might is right, then love has no place in the world'.



► The battle for a continent's soul: *The Mission*

Roland Joffe of *The Killing Fields* fame directs. And *The Mission* was the winner of The Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival and numerous other awards. Even after a second viewing of *The Mission* I was emotionally drained. Though some of the superb photography of award-winning Chris Menges is lost in the transition to the small screen, the strong and involving atmosphere still exists thanks to the superb music of Ennio Morricone. *The Mission* is a visual and emotional experience, culminating in a breathtaking ending, so put aside plenty of viewing time – you'll need a day to recover.

DOMINIC HANDY 95%

The Mission is a brilliant film, a masterpiece in every respect. The acting is excellent, and the story moving, fluent and exciting. It probably won't be trendy or popular, but it deserves all the awards it has won and more.

MIKE DUNN 90%



► An American girl in the outback: Linda Kozlowski with Paul Hogan in *Crocodile Dundee*

CROCODILE DUNDEE

CBS/Fox 15

IF YOU haven't heard of Michael J 'Crocodile' Dundee, I suggest you now leave the room – the character played by Paul Hogan (TV's *Anzacs*) has already gone down in film history as one of the most amiable characters ever to come out of the Australia outback.

Walkabout Creek is a small isolated town in the Northern Territory, and like all such towns it has its characters. One is Mick Dundee, a man who, legend has it, got half his leg bitten off by a croc while fishing in the outback, and crawled over 100 miles back to civilisation... 'past the hospital and straight into the nearest pub'.

The story reaches the ears of American journalist Sue Charlton (Linda Kozlowski) in Sydney; so immediately she hops in a helicopter and, for £2,500, goes looking for crocodiles with Never Never Safaris ('never go out with us, if you do you'll never come back') – her guide Mick Dundee.

Dundee, keen to impress his sultry New York companion, guides her through the Australian bush along the track which he crawled home – keeping a watchful eye on her all the way because, as Dundee puts it, 'You're a woman. You're a reporter. You're the biggest busybody in the world.' And watching herself come to grips with the Aussie outback gives Charlton a great idea of how to end her article. Why not see how Crocodile Dundee copes in New York, a human jungle?

In the streets of New York, Dundee observes: 'Imagine seven million people all wanting to live together. Yep! New York must be the friendliest place on Earth.' And besides the usual problems of coming to grips with a bidet, taxi drivers and hotel porters, Dundee also encounters hookers, junkies, tramps and transvestites.

Crocodile Dundee is an easily-lovable movie. The humour is very simple but effective, appealing to all ages. (The 15-rated video version is slightly different from the 15-rated cinema version: out goes one four-letter word.) Forget all the hype, just enjoy!

DOMINIC HANDY 90%

An ingenious mixture of slapstick and social comedy, stunning scenery and backstreet seediness, Crocodile Dundee is perfect. The humour is sharp, yet never cruel; the film is warm, yet it never cloy, not even in the final reconciliation scene, which would be squirmingly sentimental in the hands of most film-makers.

There is just one joke concept: the difference between the Australian outback and the New York sidewalks, seen from both sides. We leave Australia when Dundee's he-mannishness is about to get boring, and the second half is perhaps the better, with every snappy punch line and caricatured New York type sewn into a fast-moving script without visible seams.

Crocodile Dundee is not breathtaking or terrifying or moving or even worth discussing much – it's just worth watching as a pure romantic comedy where everything works.

BARNABY PAGE 92%



► BOARD OF THE KINGS

Sentinel programmer Geoff Crammond was 'bowled over' by this chess set based on characters from his game, says the maker.

There's just one of these sets in the world, and it's the work of London photographer Peter Clements. As a hobby he'd produced the limited-edition hand-cast *Sentinel* badges (102 in existence) and went on to make the chess set based on *Firebird's* Issue 40 Smash.

It all started when the game got the better of him. 'On reaching Level 2974 of *The Sentinel* I gave up my quest,' Clements recalls, 'aching fingers and sore eyes having got the better of me.'

So he turned to the older, but equally time-consuming, game of chess: it took Clements 600 hours to make the set, and 'I did get bored but I didn't give up'.

Each figure in the set is based on a *Sentinel* character. The kings are based on The Sentinel himself, the queen on the Robot, the bishops on the Sentry, the knights on the Meanie, the rooks on three stacked boulders and the pawns on trees. They're painted in colours from game: the pieces on one side red, yellow and black, the opposing side is green, white and black.

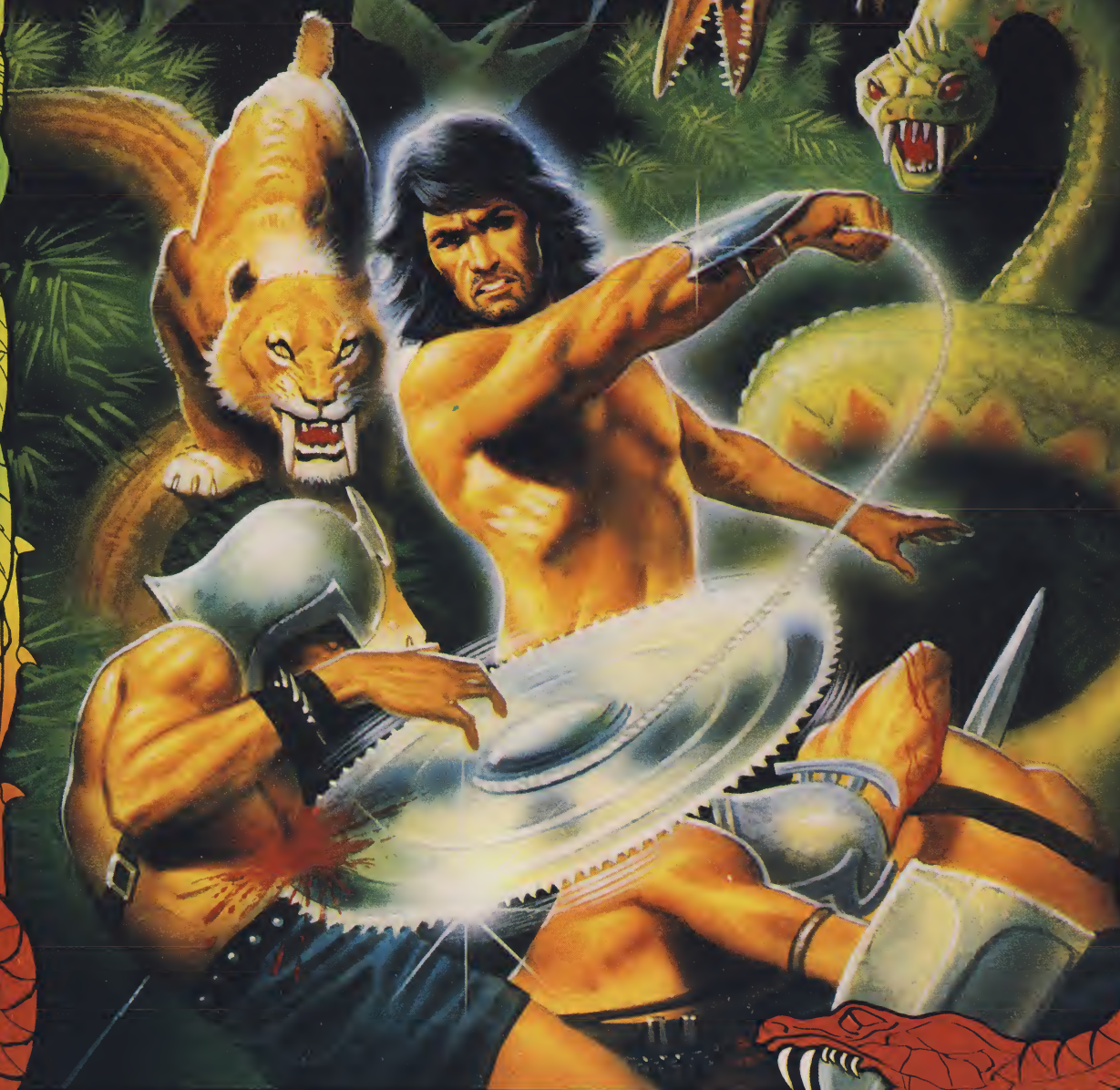
'The new chess pieces seemed to fit their role perfectly,' observes Clements.

He traced them from paused screens and first carved them in epoxy putty; the finished pieces and the board are made from polyester resin.

And after six months' work, Clements is hanging on to his unique game from a game – but, he admits, 'if someone offered me the price of the new Acorn Archimedes I might just be tempted'.

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